

International Journal of Religious Education

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no 3



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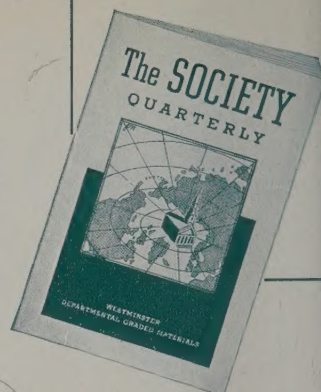
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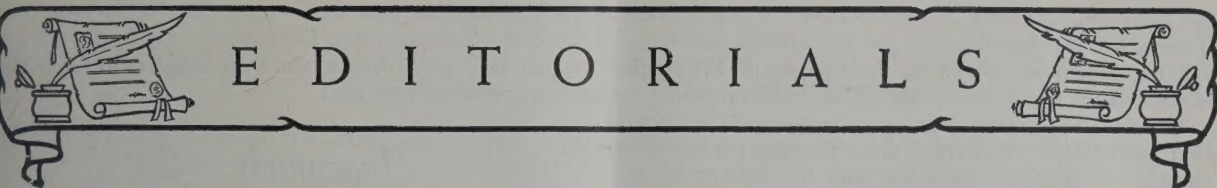
Peasant women of Soglio, near St. Moritz, Switzerland

Photo A. Steiner

A Song of Thanksgiving

*Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens;
 Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the skies.
 Thy righteousness is like the great mountains;
 Thy judgments are a great deep:
 O Lord, thou preservest man and beast.
 How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God!
 The children of men take refuge under the shadow of thy wings.
 They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house;
 And thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.
 For with thee is the fountain of life:
 In thy light shall we see light.
 O continue thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee,
 And thy righteousness to the upright in heart.*

—PSALM 36:5-10



EDITORIALS

The Journal This Month

PICTURES of special interest in themselves, as well as for November, are used in this issue.

The National Monument to the Forefathers, displayed in the front cover picture, is a magnificent pillar of Maine granite, eighty-one feet in height, surmounted by a statue thirty-eight feet high which represents Faith. The seated figures represent Morality, Law, Education, and Freedom. The monument stands at Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The picture on the page with the table of contents is of St. Botolph's Church in Boston, Lincolnshire, England. John Cotton was for twenty-one years vicar of this church. The English High Commission attempted his arrest because he refused to observe certain ceremonies prescribed in the Anglican liturgy. He escaped to Massachusetts in 1633 and was elected as teacher, later preacher, of the church in Boston. He wrote a catechism, "Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes in either England" which was used for more than one hundred and fifty years and incorporated in many editions of the New England Primer. The tower of the St. Botolph's church, finished about 1420, is inappropriately known as "the Boston Stump," and is visible across far reaches of the low fen lands of Lincolnshire. A replica of it will stand at the center of the new Boston University campus in Boston, Massachusetts. Thus in its close connection with a Boston on each side of the Atlantic the famous "Stump" is a symbol of the common spiritual ancestry of two great English-speaking nations.

The gala and significant season of Christmas gets the place of first importance in the *Journal* this month. A Christmas play entitled "The Topaz of Ethiopia" is printed in this issue in time for church groups to begin rehearsal so as to present this dramatization at Christmas. The setting is that of today, with use of an imaginative legend and the application of the essential Christmas message to modern life. We also provide a program by which the modern device known as the speaking choir can be used in dealing with the Christmas story and presenting an effective Christmas program. An interpretation of Christmas, with suggestions as to how one community carried on a united Christmas project, is given in a special article. A short pageant needing only slight rehearsal will appear in December.

The series on understanding and helping persons continues this month with a discussion of the use of ordinary, everyday opportunities for conversations. The series on the home deals with that crucial and ever-present problem of parents in helping their children to learn about God.

With special reference to the month of November and Armistice Day, we print this month an article on the relationship between education for peace and missionary education itself.

Leaders in the nursery department will be interested in the article giving reports from the experiences of an active nursery leader. We expect that others from this group will be

printed later. We introduce with much pleasure this month the first of a series of brief selections from the journal of the wife of a rural minister. There is much of everyday human interest in these paragraphs and also, we believe, there are many suggestions as to the importance as well as the best method of Christian education in the country church.

In this number we have another symposium. This one deals with the problem of the use of the drama in the educational program of the church. This is the second in this series. It is expected that there will be such a discussion about every other month throughout the present year.

Reader, Here You Are!

IN JULY the *Journal* wished a questionnaire upon its readers—to find out who and what they are. It was done with suitable fear and trembling, because of the widespread antagonism to such devices. But the responses have been encouraging, and of great value. They are still coming in, but tabulations have been made of many hundred replies, with some interesting findings. Since our readers may like to see what they look like, collectively, we give the following summary of the results.

First some circulation figures from the mailing list will be helpful. The 20,000 copies of the *Journal* go each month to every state in the Union, the ones leading in number being, in order, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Illinois, California, and Massachusetts. It goes to nine Canadian provinces, the largest numbers to Nova Scotia and Ontario. And 433 copies go to thirty-six foreign countries, particularly to China, India, New Zealand, Hawaii, Japan, and the Philippines.

One or more of you readers will be found in each of the forty-one constituent denominations of the Council, and in several others besides. It is not entirely clear whether the denomination leading in number is the Presbyterian in the U.S.A. or the Methodist Episcopal, but the most recent returns seem to indicate the latter. The Congregational Christian and the Northern Baptist come next in order. The local churches to which you belong have an average membership of 571, and an average budget of almost \$10,000, of which sixty-two per cent goes to salaries and benevolences.

According to the returns, thirty-eight per cent of you are ministers, and another sixteen per cent are engaged in some kind of professional religious work. Among the lay readers, home makers are the largest group answering, followed by school teachers, employees, and then employers.

You largely recommend or control the purchase of various kinds of materials used in the church school, eighty per cent of you being interested in lesson courses, and seventy-two per cent in miscellaneous supplies. Between sixty and seventy per cent checked educational equipment, hymn books, devotional aids, Bibles, pictures, and plays and pageants, and fifty-nine per cent kindergarten or primary handwork materials. All of the items listed ranked high.

One of the most surprising returns was your response to the questions on using motion pictures in the church. Twenty-five per cent reported that you already use motion pictures, sometimes borrowing the equipment. Fifty-eight per cent of the remainder are interested in this method.

You are a highly literate group, as we modestly suspected from your taking the *Journal*. Over fifty-five per cent frequently buy religious books and forty per cent of the remainder occasionally do so. Also twenty per cent of you frequently purchase general literature and more than half do so occasionally. You do not buy much fiction regularly but forty-three per cent of you do sometimes.

In your financial standing, you readers are among the moderately prosperous of the "middle classes." The highest salary named was \$9500. The average is approximately \$2000 a year, and the median only \$200 less. Only thirty-two per cent own your own homes, but fifty per cent own automatic refrigerators, seventy-four per cent automobiles, and eighty-four per cent radios.

A number of you sent in very interesting letters and reports of your work, which we greatly appreciate. The comments made as to editorial policy have been most useful and enlightening. A heart-warming number approve in general of what the editors are doing. It may take several months before some of your suggestions can be taken into account, but they will not be forgotten.

From this questionnaire the editors feel closer to you people who read the magazine, and see you at work in

your churches, small and large. You are friendly, conscientious, responsible men and women, leaders in your own group or community, who through your day by day fidelity to your tasks are setting forward the kingdom of God. We are very glad to meet you!

"Inasmuch——"

Now, the pastor of a certain church went to a distant city to attend a convention. He was a Christian, a cultured gentleman, and a Negro. So, he could understand what happened when he went to a hotel to register. Although he had made reservation, when he presented himself at the desk, the clerk said that some mistake had been made, that the rooms were all taken, that the manager was out, that he should come back later. Two trips back proved to be of no use, although the hotel had agreed in advance to accept Negroes during the convention. As he put it, after three times at bat, he considered himself out!

He then completed his registration at the convention, read the greetings of the local committee on the official program, thought of the hotel experience, and tried to harmonize what he had read with what he had experienced. By that time, he needed what he calls "some help in both my mental and emotional adjustment." So he went to three of the chief officers of the convention with his problem. He says,

"These three officials did not rest or sleep until they had first convinced themselves that a mistake had actually been made at this hotel in question, and that all the rooms had been taken. Then, these gentlemen kept on well into the night until they had made contact with the different hotels. Finally one of them personally accompanied me to a beautiful and comfortable room where I remained.

"Why did these high officials take such a personal interest in me? I am just one of the many delegates attending this convention for the first time. The answer is, these men are Christians. They went with me 'the second mile.' They were putting the spirit of this great convention into action, in a real life situation, and creating for me a Christian atmosphere. And this, to my mind, is just what the convention as a whole was doing; it was creating a Christian atmosphere, so that Christian workers from the various sections of the country, regardless of race, could enter into a Christian fellowship, not normally possible in most of our cities.

"The convention also said to its delegates, both by precept and example, 'Go back to your local communities and help to create a Christian atmosphere, so that even those who have so often had unpleasant experiences may be given another chance. Let every one have a fair chance in the game of life, that we may all enter into a Christian fellowship.' This is what the convention said to its delegates. I know this is what it said to me. I accept the challenge."

Now, one important thing about this letter is the fact that these men, when they read this letter afterwards, were only incidentally aware that they were dealing with a race problem; it was a human problem to them, because here was a man in distress whom they could help. They were deeply impressed with the fact that what was to them something to be done as part of their duty was, to a man in a difficult situation, an impressive manifestation of a Christian ideal in action. One of them has asked that this story be told to inspire others who also forget the meaning of that statement, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

We Are the Guns of War

An Armistice Day Message

We are the Guns of War,

We are new-comers in the long lineage of human hate.

We have our own spiritual forebears—the club, the arrow speeding to its human mark, the spear, the sword flashing in the sun.

Through the long centuries, in the mines of the world, we awaited our destiny.

We waited for man's energy to unearth us, for his skill to devise us, for his indomitable purpose to fashion us.

We have bided our time—until his science should make us strong, his mathematics aim us, his organizing genius feed us, his loving labor save us from rust.

We waited for man's fear to trundle us forth, for his distrust to select our target, for his hate to touch us into action.

We speak when man bids us. We slay when lust of power has dimmed his reason and only death can feed his imperial desire.

Then, when through us a seeming victor stands upon a stricken field, we begin again our long and certain wait, knowing that we alone have conquered.

We yield at last only to one who said, "Blessed are the peace makers."

We are the Guns of War.

—P. R. H.

Meditations

By ALLAN KNIGHT CHALMERS*

DR. CHALMERS continues his *Meditations*, which many readers are using week by week in preparing for their church school work. The one for the second Sunday is particularly appropriate for Armistice Day. The Prayer for the Month might well find a place in the worship service of the adult department.

A Prayer for the Month

Before thee, O God, as we gather in the church, we pour out our hearts in strong confidence:—Strong because we come before thee in this moment to acknowledge our sin:—Sin greater by far than many who have done more evil in the eyes of men. We have seen thee and have not given more evidence of it to the world. Beauty has been our privilege and we are still complacent in the midst of ugliness. Strong conviction has been our heritage and we have been timid in following the guidance of our tradition. Power has been in our hands and we have used it weakly.

We can give good account of ourselves to men. Laws we have not violated, charity we have given, service we have rendered. In the judgment of men we can be justified.

Against thee, thee only have we sinned and done this evil. That we have not done all we knew—nor used all life we had. We have declined from vision and let enough be said when more was in our power.

Let more wisdom be in our minds. To keep heads clear in the noise and confusion of this world while the winds of self-desire blow upon us is not easy. We are swept along with the mob.

Let more sympathy be in our hearts. To keep concern for others when self is present is not easy. We are swept away into eddies in the stream of life by the demands of self.

We are not strong, O God, save in the curious strength that comes to weak hands and feeble knees when thy love is in our hearts and thy way in our minds. Bless us in the sincerity of our search for truth and give us peace in the abandon of ourselves to thy love.

I We thank thee for the *unsatisfied* heart of Jesus who was not content with the love and loyalty of those who were willing to give up all and follow him. He saw the multitudes and knew their hearts and wept over them as they passed by. He believed in them when they did not believe in themselves. He knew that they could become thy sons, O God, and so lived that he set in the heart of the world the imperishable memory of a life wholly committed unto thee.

II We thank thee for the *unweariable* heart of Jesus, who never gives us up. When all around seemed hopeless and even the closest to him did not understand his purpose, he still knew them to be his own and told them, when they were most bewildered and afraid: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

We think of his calmness in the face of force in this week when old wars are in our minds and new ones sur-

round us on every side, making our hearts to be heavy with the knowledge that in war all we hold most dear in our religion is endangered. We teach these boys about a Way of Life and they pledge their loyalty to the leadership of Christ. Calm, straight, and strong, they grow up with visions in their eyes. And the brutal cadences of war catch them up and their feet walk the ancient ways of the world's fears and its stupidities.

Make sure in the minds of those who teach, the clear contrast between the words of Our Lord's Prayer and the ways of war, and strengthen our hearts to keep the witness of thy peace even in a world gone mad with hates, and fears, and low desires.

And we are grateful unto thee, O God, that, unweariable, thy Spirit does not let us go.

III We thank thee for the *unafraid* heart of Jesus. There is so much sordidness in what man does and wants to do that we are often afraid that it is all a dream, this idea that we are the sons and daughters of God. The world is waiting for the witness of a church made up of people whose "hearts are set on thine obedience." And what we are—we are; and the world passes by. How can an outside world believe what we do not believe enough to live? Yet looking upon our flesh—seeing the nature of our being, he took one of the most wobbly of the disciples and said, "Upon *this* rock I shall build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." To be unafraid in the midst of fear is the wonder of his spirit.

IV We thank thee for the *unchanging* heart of Jesus. He did not bargain with his vision. He knew truth, touched beauty, and made no bargains with his God. He gave himself. "Though a thousand times he felt the thrust of faith betrayed, he still believed in man." Unchanging was his purpose. He had no reserves in things he did not choose to lose. He was not concerned about what his tomorrow was to be, because he knew that today he *must* serve God.

Father Almighty, God of all loveliness, Spirit of Perfection, for the revelation of thyself in the Christ, we give thee humble and hearty thanks. All glory, laud, and honor be to thee, O God. *Amen.*

A GRACE FOR THANKSGIVING DINNER

"Eternal Giver of all good and perfect gifts, we come unto thee in gladness and in gratitude for the fertility of fields and groves, for the constancy of sun and shower, for the patient labor of unseen hands out of which this our food has come. Speed thou our thoughts, O God, to those who sit today at meager or empty boards. Strengthen thou the persons and the forces that, in all lands and creeds and parties, joyously labor to shape a just and brotherly world. Thus may thy will be done throughout thy bountiful earth. Amen." —Anon.

* Pastor, Broadway Tabernacle Church (Congregational), New York City.

Can Missionary and Peace Education Be Integrated?

By MARION D. TOMLINSON*

WHETHER considers the question of missionary education as a means of carrying out effective peace education must do so in the light of very limited experience, because peace education on a large scale in this country is a recent development. Although there is a natural alignment between missionary education and peace education there is also a conflict, just as natural, and a problem common to the world-wide church.

Fifty years ago missionary education laid the emphasis on the salvation of souls dwelling in the darkness of superstition, fear, and degrading social custom. This was to be done through the Gospel message and through the ministry of healing. Today it adds to that message and ministry, higher education, social service, public health, rural rehabilitation. The appeal then was limited largely to the religious idealism of Christians. Today beautiful buildings, attractive young people who are visitors to this country, nationals who have risen to eminence in the service of their country, American travelers returned home from visits to the centers of missionary work—all these

are both the witnesses and the advocates of the missionary cause. Missionary education has a basic philosophy, and it has methods, projects, and personalities which have been created over a long period of struggle, failure, and success of devoted men and women who have believed in the redemptive power of Jesus Christ. It has opened to us the vision, of which the reality is emerging, of a world-wide church.

In comparison, education for peace is in its infancy. After the World War people said "Never again," and then set about to make their words real. In our own memory the surge of the people of the United States in support of the Washington Naval Conference of 1921 was the first popular manifestation of its need. All over the country peace organizations sprang up overnight; the organized groups took on the study of international relations. Later the churches came out with pronouncements by their national bodies. The word pacifist was coined. Debate on the World Court began and after ten years it was buried in the United States Senate. The Kellogg-Briand Pact was ratified by all the nations. A second Naval Conference was held in London in 1930, a World Disarmament Conference in 1932. In all of these public international projects church and missionary

groups gave active support and secured support from others.

Such was the introduction of the masses to peace education. Long before the twenties were over, however, more serious work had been begun, pioneers in this being the Williamstown Institute of Politics, the Foreign Policy Association, the National Council for Prevention of War, the National Conference on the Cause and Cure of War, the Federal Council of Churches. The interested public decided to sit down to forums, panel discussions, conferences, seminars, institutes through the year. In 1931, 3700 courses on international relations were in college curricula; schools of citizenship and of international relations were formed and endowed; came a flood of books and pamphlet literature on every imaginable relevant subject.

Meanwhile organized groups were specializing in research, literature, speakers, radio broadcasting, drama posters, movies. They also drew together in a two year Emergency Peace Campaign out of which grew a permanent organization called the National Peace Conference which is both an executive and a coordinating body for

forty groups engaged in peace education.

Of all of this church and missionary boards have been part and parcel. Their large constituency has been touched to the extent of greater awareness of the problem of war and peace.

Initiating the revolt against war, the underlying drive of the peace movement and the thesis of its education has been the prevention of war, the organization of peace, and the creation of informed public opinion that would hold steady in time of crises. Looking about the world today, the internationalist has a sense of profound disillusionment. The feverish activity of the past eighteen years may be peace education, but can it be called effective?

None can deny that it is extensive. This is where the conflict arises when missionary education is considered as a means of carrying out effective peace education. The missionary program also is far reaching and complex. Besides, its dynamic is religion. A world view, the salvation of man and of civilization for high ends, they have in common. But if or how two such great programs are to be integrated is a bit foggy. To date the infiltration of the peace program into the missionary program is at best superficial and the results vague.

Armistice

*Without a gun let's celebrate today!
Let not a single line of marching men
Arouse our hate and passion once again
To barter lives and manhood throw away.
We've had enough, and more, of ribald din;
Too much of fanfare, cheap and shallow talk
Of lying "patriots" who, with swagging walk,
Deceive our minds and cause our souls to sin.
The world today is sick with fear and hate;
Dread cannon blast and roar in distant lands;
Mankind is armed to turn to desert sands
The garden spots of earth, or soon or late.
Today let's celebrate with different fare—
Be penitent and humbly bow in prayer.*

—JOHN C. SLEMP

* Chairman, Christian Citizenship Department, Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, Methodist Episcopal Church, Evanston, Illinois.

A County Council Sponsors Choral Music

By MRS. PERRY CLIFFORD*

COOPERATIVE work among the Sunday schools of a county often leads to interesting projects. The writer of this story believes that a county council, with its organization of many church schools, offers a real opportunity for the development of sacred choral music. This experience should encourage other councils to undertake activities of like educational value.

THE dramatization of Handel's oratorio, *The Messiah*, which appeared last year in the December issue of this magazine, had its origin in a county council of religious education. This was in Faulk County, South Dakota, the center of snow blizzards, sand blizzards, and drought, which conditions create stamina, courage and a certain tenacious optimism.

When my husband, who is a farmer, was elected president of the Faulk County Sunday School Association, he set out on a round of visiting the Sunday schools in his county. He found, amongst other good features, good musical talent in each school, but only a small amount of it. Each school was invited to send its best talent to a county meeting of singers to rehearse something to sing for the coming County Convention program. A chorus from *The Messiah* was chosen for the singers to work on and the music was ordered in single chorus form. The next year that chorus was used again and another one started. The following year fifteen minutes of the convention were devoted to hearing the group sing three choruses from *The Messiah*.

By this time the singers were in love with the work and had mustered up courage enough to plan for a separate evening of a formal presentation of the oratorio, or at least as much as is usually given in a concert. There was no college, civic group, or large church to sponsor this movement, for the largest town in the county had a population of only seven hundred. So the county Sunday School Association, or County Council of Religious Education, as it is now called, was appealed to for help in buying books. The Council saw the need and opportunity, bought books and started the Faulk County Oratorio Chorus on its way. Money spent for books was repaid to the Council by the Chorus, and the Chorus has been self supporting ever since.

The singers established four rehearsal points within the county, where the director meets the local singers in group singing; and, as time for the annual concert approaches, the groups meet in general rehearsals. Each group elects one singer to the Executive Board. This board shapes the policy of the chorus each year, sets dates, selects soloists, sets dues, and the individual member acts as a memory jogger and relayer of information to his own group.

Though the membership is not large, being held down purposely to facilitate seating on auditorium stages and church choir lofts, it does cover a wide territory, and has spread over the edges of the county into three other counties. The director, Perry Clifford, has as assistant directors: LeVergne Hildebrandt, Aberdeen business man, and Gerald Sielert, Dakota Wesleyan University student. Parentheti-

cally, Sielert, who is a by-product of the Faulk County Oratorio Chorus, has directed the County Youth Chorus for the County Council Convention three consecutive years, and last year directed a Tri-County Chorus at the State Convention, in recognition of which he was sent to the Lake Geneva Youth Camp. Hildebrandt, who got most of his musical training through, or because of the Faulk Chorus, directs *Messiah* singing in his own city church.

And so the work encouraged and sponsored by the County Council goes on and on.

The policy of the chorus in the early years of its history was to hire soloists from Minneapolis, Chicago, or some of the musical celebrities within the state. This was never a financial burden, for dues from the chorus, silver offering at the concert and contributions from interested people took care of the finances. But with the coming of the depression the policy changed. Members of the chorus were asked to sing solos and as a result so many members started taking private voice lessons that the tone quality of the chorus has greatly improved.

Another policy of the chorus had been to sing only within the county. But that plan has changed a few times when the chorus has been asked to sing at the conventions of the State Council of Religious Education. Also, the chorus furnished the afternoon program of a Chautauqua week Sunday, and sang for the State Federation of Music Clubs Convention.

The first *Messiah* chorus was sung in the Faulk County Convention eighteen years ago, and this year marks the fifteenth annual concert. While it is not necessary any longer for the Council to sponsor the Oratorio chorus, there is still a warm cooperation between the two, and the individual church schools furnish talent and make announcements for the chorus.

The church schools throughout the county contributed talent and costumes for the dramatization of the oratorio, when that took place two years ago. The schools in turn got from the dramatization inspiration and ideals to carry out in their own Christmas and Easter programs. And so, in Faulk County, the work runs round in a never ending circle, with the Council helping the chorus and the chorus helping the Council.

Only Fifty-Five Days

YOUR LIST of Christmas gifts will soon be one of your happy—but sometimes perplexing—concerns. Here are two suggestions for taking care of any number of your friends easily, inexpensively, and to their profit.

First, send a year's subscription to the *International Journal* to all whom it would serve. Details about our annual popular Christmas offer at a special rate will be given next month.

Second, your pastor, your superintendent, or someone else deeply interested in Christian education would appreciate a Sustaining Membership in the International Council. Send for full details to 203 North Wabash Ave., Chicago, Illinois.

* Cresbard, South Dakota.

How Conversations Help

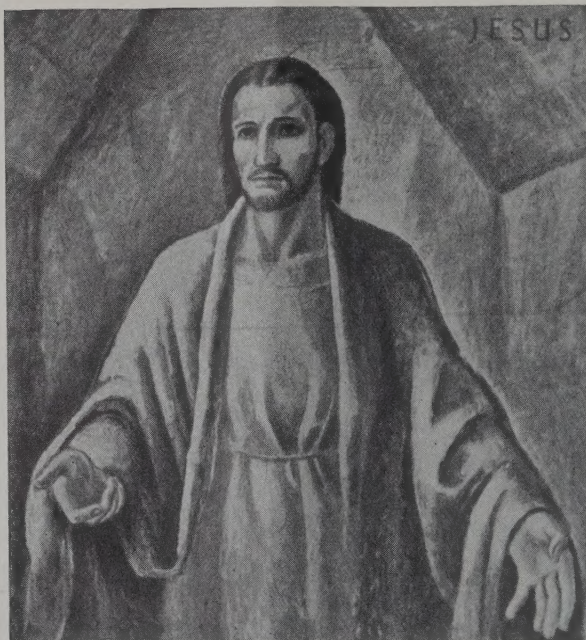
By CHARLES T. HOLMAN*

CONVERSATION is at once the most powerful and the most readily available means for helping people or for hindering them. This is true for young or old. Such encouraging words to children as "Bill, you've got a lot of stuff; give it all you've got and you'll make a corking first baseman!" or, "Betty, you've got a fine feeling for words; if you work hard you'll give us all reason to be proud of you!" may stimulate and release unsuspected energies and abilities. While, on the other hand, such thoughtless remarks as, "Bill, you will never be able to play baseball; you're too awkward!" or, "Betty, I'm afraid you're not very bright; Alice learns far more easily than you!" may do immeasurable harm by implanting in the child's mind a painful feeling of inadequacy and by inhibiting normal effort to achieve.

Why is conversation so important? Simply because it is in the intimate relationships where people talk face to face and communicate their ideas, attitudes and purposes, informally and directly, that, far more than anywhere else, personality is shaped and character determined. The sociologist has pointed out the importance of the "primary group" (that is, the intimate group living in face-to-face relationships, the "we-group" as some have called it) in molding the plastic material out of which personalities are constructed. And the easy flow of conversation, with all its give and take, is the chief mechanism through which the interaction of persons in such groups takes place.

CONVERSATIONS REVEAL ATTITUDES

Indeed, one can hardly over-emphasize the importance of conversation. For, while few of us make public speeches, all of us more or less continually engage in conversation. And it is in our casual conversations, rather than in our more carefully considered utterances, that we express our genuine opinions, our fundamental attitudes toward life, and our vital beliefs. "Be careful, the children might hear!" a wife admonished her husband, when in an unguarded moment he spoke critically about another person. And the mother was wise, for it is precisely in such unpremeditated remarks that we at once express our true opinions and most powerfully influence the thinking of others. If the attitudes and convictions that thus find expression are wholesome and con-



Mural, Department of Justice, Washington By Ewing Galloway, N.Y.

Jesus was a master conversationalist

structive we are, in our everyday conversation, providing the most helpful environment in which character can mature.

"Whatever else I do, I'm going to make money. It's possessing money, and lots of it, that gives a man security and power in this world." So said a young man to an older and wiser friend. But his friend replied, "Some day, my boy, you're going to meet a man who cares nothing about money, but who does possess much else that enriches his life. Then, if money is all that you have, you'll know how poor you are." That remark challenged the youth to serious thought, and an honest reappraisal of the real values of life. For was that not exactly what Jesus also said in one of his informal talks, "A man's life consisteth not of the abundance of the things that he possesseth."

TECHNIQUE OF COUNSELING

One hears a good deal about "counseling" programs today—in education, social service, mental hygiene, and in the church. But what is counseling except conversation between one who seeks guidance and another who is believed to have experience and knowledge which will enable him to be of help? The technique of the interview has been given much attention, particularly by social case workers and mental hygienists. But the interview is simply conversation. And it is interesting to note that among the points emphasized as of major importance in a successful interview are these two: first, that the counselor shall be a good listener; and second, that the counselor shall not issue authoritative directions to the counselee, but that the two together shall endeavor to gain an understanding of the difficult situation and work out a solution. Even the clinical psychologist, who uses certain standard tests and instruments, and the psychiatrist, who makes careful physical examinations and prescribes medical treatment, find that in the treatment of functional personality disorders, conversation is the most important and effective tool in both diagnosis and treatment. Patient and consultant talk together. The process is very largely one of re-education through conversation.

The older evangelism understood the importance of conversation. Spectacular meetings and powerful emotional platform appeals generally come to mind when one recalls the revival campaigns of the past. But always personal work was carefully organized; that is to say, many persons were trained to talk face to face with individuals. Dwight L. Moody, at

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a meeting in which he was welcomed back to Chicago after a triumphal tour around the world, said that in all his experience he had only known one person who was converted in one of his meetings who had not been previously dealt with personally.

Jesus was a master conversationalist. Stories of his conversations with individuals form an astonishingly large part of the record of his ministry. And these conversations provide models which we all might follow with profit, both as to method and materials. He was always courteous, sincere, direct, considerate of others, never overbearing, never failing to show respect for the personality of the individual with whom he conversed. And his conversation related to the actual problems of the people with whom he talked; he made their interests and needs the center of discussion.

STIMULATING OTHERS TO HARD TASKS

No one, probably, was ever as successful as Jesus in stirring those with whom he conversed to realize themselves at their best. Others have possessed that capacity in high degree. The younger Pitt fired many gifted young men with ambition and sent them out to lives of great achievement. To Wilberforce he said, "You are the kind of man who ought to be fighting some evil thing. Find some great evil in our national life and give your life to fighting it. . . . I know what it ought to be. Take the slave trade. Find out something about it. Fight it." And we all know what the incentive of those words did in transforming Wilberforce into the fiery crusader who wiped out the slave traffic in the British empire. But no one ever saw the latent possibilities of his friends as did Jesus. "He knew what was in man." In a harlot he could see the potentialities of a saint; in a publican an apostle; in a vacillating and volatile fisherman an inflexible and indomitable leader. And it was in conversation with these, and others like them, that he stimulated and released their powers. To the uncertain Simon he said, "Thou art Peter (a rock); and upon this rock I will build my church!" No one else saw it, but the hidden granite in Peter's character was visible to the Master, and was called forth by him. If our eyes were open, and we were ready with the timely word, we might work such transformations of character also.

HELP TO THE DISTRESSED

In his *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, Dr. C. G. Jung, the great psychotherapist, tells us that of all the thousands of persons from all civilized lands who have consulted him during the past thirty years, all of them who were in the second half of life have had as their fundamental problem that of finding a religious outlook upon life. Above all they had lost that which religion has always given to its adherents, a sense of the meaning and value of life. And no one of these patients, he tells us, was cured, except as he regained religious assurance. Multitudes of people suffer in this way. Fears, worries, anxieties, frustrations, defeats, bereavements pile up to render life a burden, to break morale, and to make life seem a meaningless muddle for many.

In the parish of one minister was a woman who had suffered such an unbelievable series of disasters, and had so reacted to them, that when the pastor called and attempted

to speak of God to her, she replied bitterly, "I don't believe in God—not the God you believe in anyway. If there is a God he is a devil. He only wants to see us suffer!" Wisely the pastor did not try to argue her out of her view and thus drive her into deeper isolation. He expressed sympathy with and understanding of her attitude, in view of the tragic experience she had suffered; but accompanied that expression with a clear indication of his own confident faith. For he saw what she did not see, that it was not the events themselves, but her attitude toward them, based upon a self-centered view of life, that accounted for her bitterness and her deepest suffering. With infinite patience and tact he succeeded in interesting her in other people, also suffering

adversity, to whom she might render service, and in rendering such service, she saved herself. Her private welfare and happiness, her ego-centric desires, were removed from the center of the picture, and life took on new

meaning. She became able to say with her Master (words spoken, by the way, in private conversation with his disciples), "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." It was not through preaching, important as preaching is, that this woman was helped into a happy and successful life, but through ordinary, everyday, friendly conversation, supplemented by intelligent service.

JESUS THE EXAMPLE

How shall fear-stricken and anxious men find an assurance of life's meaning and worth? Only by finding some great commanding social cause to which they can commit themselves utterly, in which they can lose themselves with their petty interests and concerns, and thus find themselves in a larger purpose. "Whosoever will lose his life," said Jesus in conversation with his disciples, "shall find it." And when that cause to which men commit themselves is believed to be the will and purpose of God, then life takes on its largest meaning. One becomes an instrument of the purpose of God, and what happens to one's petty and private interests becomes relatively insignificant. Life's true fulfilment is found in doing the will of God. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness," was the injunction of Jesus to his disciples.

It was because this was the deepest reality of Jesus' own life that he could face his own black tragedy undefeated in spirit, and on the eve of that disaster encourage his disciples with the word, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." In self-forgetfulness and devotion to the will of God he found release from fear and anxiety, and to his disciples who so shortly would desperately need similar release, he could both set an example and point the way. And, again, it was in the constructive use of conversation that he brought this help,—conversation made the means of communicating courage and power.

The significance of the conversations of Jesus in transforming life, in bringing courage, in stimulating worth-while endeavor, in freeing men from all sorts of bondage, in helping them in the crises of life, in releasing the positive, con-

(Continued on page 44)



Gifts



A Christmas Worship Service with Speaking Choir

By LUCY WEITZEL McMILLIN*

Notes on Presentation

The story of the birth of Christ and of the magi and shepherds is arranged from verses in the second chapter of Luke and the second chapter of Matthew. The hymns suggested may be sung by the regular choir, or by a group of children and young people, or by the entire audience.

It must be remembered that in choral speaking the voice is the instrument used, and that careful interpretation and expression are of the utmost importance. Try different voices for the solo parts, as this will suggest different interpretations, and also give the director the opportunity to choose the one best fitted for that part.

In preparation for the service, "Gifts," the director will call rehearsal of the group to be used in the Choral Speaking parts of the program. Fifteen to thirty voices will make a most satisfactory number. These voices are divided into high and low groups. This does not mean soprano, alto, tenor and bass. It refers to the speaking voice. By having each person read a few lines, the director will be able to make proper placement of the individuals. Many directors feel that they obtain the best results when they seat their group on different levels. Of course the high voices and the low voices should be grouped together, the low seated to the right, high to the left.

The leader and the solo voices are seated within the group, while the director's place is in front. He may use a baton if its use is familiar to him, or the hands may be used for direction. Care must be taken that the low voices do not drown the high ones. After the solo parts have been selected, the group takes the selections as indicated in the script. Take time for careful interpretation. Remember that one of the best ways to show emphasis is by the proper use of the pause. Avoid any appearance or feeling of haste. The conductor should be inconspicuous during the final presentation.

Sufficient rehearsals are necessary so that every beginning word is clear cut. The story should go smoothly from group or individual to another without any hesitancy, so that the continuity of the message will not be broken.

Uniform robes will, of course, add to the effectiveness of the picture. They give an appearance of oneness which is to be desired. Baby spots, with various colored shields, used throughout the service will add to the beauty of the message. Care should be exercised in the use of blue spots, for while blue is lovely on white

robes, it often casts shadows on faces which make them appear grotesque. Somber lights, and brilliant gold, contrasting at various places in the story, will add to the atmosphere desired. Rehearsals with lights are of vital importance. If it is not feasible to use costumes and lights, the service may be presented in the simplest form, without them.

The group will stand after the hymn, "Joy to the World," and remain standing until the prayer. On through the program they will be standing between hymns and for the benediction.

There are several reliable text books on choral speaking which may be obtained from various play publishing houses. I should like to recommend *The Art of Choral Speaking* as a comprehensive study of this subject. Cecile de Banke, the author, speaks with authority. She writes of the origin, growth, values, forms and backgrounds; she discusses meter, rhythm, the music of speech, and presents the means of acquiring proper enunciation and articulation. This book also includes a classified list of selections especially fitted to choral speaking. It will more than repay any worker who will give it the study it rightly deserves. It may be secured from Walter H. Baker Company, 178 Tremont St., Boston, Massachusetts. (Price, \$1.75.)

It is no mean task to undertake the preparation of a choral speaking program. To be successful, adequate preparation is absolutely essential. This requires enthusiasm on the part of the members of the group, careful rehearsals, and exacting direction. The realization of mutual joy which comes from such mutual endeavor is inevitable. It will take time, energy, cooperation, and fine loyalty—gifts worthy to be His! It will give satisfactions which words can not define, to those who succeed in such an undertaking.

Gifts

MUSICAL PRELUDE: Medley of familiar carols, including "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," and "We Three Kings of Orient Are."

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: I call you to the worship of the Christ, the Christ born in Bethlehem, the Christ whose advent brought us gifts everlasting.

I call you to the worship of the Christ, and to the giving of thanks to God the Father for his exceeding kindness, his love, and his greatest of all gifts, his Son, and our Saviour.

HYMN: "Joy to the World."

CHORAL SPEAKING:

Leader: Let us harken to the story of the Magi, the wise men of old, and the gift of a Star.

All voices: Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, in the days of Herod the King, behold there came wise men from the east.

Far in the east, three dreamers saw a star;

Melchior, Caspar, and Balthazar. They followed it, these star-guided men,

Over desert sands—

On and on toward the land of the Hebrews.

Their caravans stopped seldom for rest.

It is said by one that as they journeyed, they reasoned thus.

Leader: Said Melchior,

Melchior: The skies have taught us many things, my friends. Methinks the one we seek will be a great king. Mighty he will be, his power and splendor dazzling any grandeur seen by eyes of man. Gold I take him. Gold for his kingship. I would be first to kneel and hail him, King of kings.

Leader: And Caspar told of his belief.

Caspar: Your words are wise, good Melchior. But I think he will be more than King. He will rule, yes, but he will rule our very souls, our minds, our hearts, our strength. We will obey his will, and we will worship, too. For Deity visits earth at this glad season. God born of woman. I take the holy One incense. My gift of frankincense is his! What think you Balthazar? You have long studied the stars and scrolls of sacred learning.

Leader: And Balthazar answered then,

Balthazar: You speak with wisdom rare. Yes, he is King, and High Priest, too. But all is not so joyous as you think. There is heartbreak. Life holds bitterness, and suffering is the portion of all on earth, all mortals. I take him myrrh. It is emblem of sorrow and of tragedy darker than words. Yet in his vast divinity, he will rise above such tribulations as we earthlings know; he will fling high challenge, a ringing note of joy to all the world.

Look! The Star! Does it not seem brighter? It fairly speeds across the heavens! Let us hasten.

Leader: Nor rested they until they reached Jerusalem. There in the palace of the king, they stood before Herod, the great, and asked of him a question.

Melchior, Caspar, Balthazar: Where is he who is born king of the

* Monroe, Michigan.

Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him.

All voices: When Herod the king heard these things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and the scribes together, he demanded of them, where Christ should be born. And they said unto him,

Low voices: In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, "And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel."

All voices: Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying,

Herod: Go and search diligently for the young child; and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I may go and worship him, also.

All voices: When they heard the king, they departed.

High voices:

From the eastern mountains
Pressing on they come,
Wise men, in their wisdom
To his humble home.
Stirred by deep devotion,
Hasting from afar,
Ever journeying onward,
Guided by a star.¹

All voices: And lo, the star which they saw in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy! And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child and Mary, his mother.

They worshipped Him!

They opened their treasures.

They presented unto him gifts—
gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

PRAYER: O Father, God, Giver of all good and perfect gifts, we humbly thank thee for the gift of the star, the star which shining in darkness, led wise men to thy Son. Lighten our darkness we pray.

We come from homes of plenty and peace.

We come from homes of sorrow and sadness.

We come from a world terrorized by war, and rumors of war.

O, God, let thy star shine again!

Let us follow its light as did the Magi, to the side of a manger bed, to a moment of quiet and worshipful thinking. May we hold gifts worthy to be offered to the Christ. Amen.

CHORAL SPEAKING:

Leader: Gift of a Star. . . . A light shining in darkness . . . the Star that led Magi, and tonight beckons us. . . . A Star for them, and for the shepherds, a Song.

All voices: And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flock

by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them,

A woman's voice: Fear not, for behold I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

All voices: And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying,

High voices: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace . . . good will toward men.

All voices: Theirs too was the nearness of stars, when suddenly a brighter light surrounded them and then—a Song. "Fear not!" O, the fears that clutched at their hearts that night, so long ago; such terrifying, tragic fears!

Women: The fear of war.

Men: The fear of Roman domination.

Women: The fear that their homes might be destroyed.

Men: Fear that their sons might be slaughtered. Fear of famine, disease, and . . . death.

All voices: Then to their hearts, a Song!

High voices: Fear not. Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy! It shall be to all people. A Saviour! Christ the King!

All voices: On down through centuries it rings, that song of old. Fear not. A Saviour.

A man's voice: And of those shepherds, were all eager to seek the Babe in Bethlehem? I wonder. Did some remain away, scoffing and indifferent to song?

Even as you and I.

But to those who went a sacrament—

A Mass for the Christ—

Some came with haste, and found him.

And they worshipped him, child in a manger.

A woman's voice: And when they had seen him, they made known abroad the saying which had been told them concerning the Child. . . . But Mary kept these things, pondering them in her heart.

HYMN: "There's a Song in the Air."

CHORAL SPEAKING:

Leader: And Mary said,

Mary: My soul doth magnify the Lord.

And my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my saviour.

For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for behold, from henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation.

He hath showed strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in

the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and hath exalted them of low degree.

He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He hath holpen his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy;

As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.²

Leader: Light of a guiding star.

Song of heavenly messengers.

Gifts of ineffable beauty.

And Mary's son. Gift of God. Emmanuel—God with us.

All voices: The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end. . . . to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever.³

And many nations shall go and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths.

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation,

Neither shall they learn war any more.

But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid.⁴ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.⁵

HYMN: "O Come All Ye Faithful."

CHORAL SPEAKING:

Leader: Yes, come all ye faithful.

How shall we celebrate the Mass of the Christ?

What shall we give him whose birth we honor?

What shall our gifts be?

We, who have been given such great love,

In a gift divine,

A gift intimate,

A gift infinite; Christ. . . . Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God. . . . Prince of Peace.

All voices: We bring our gift of adoration.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord,
The Christmas world is full of his glory.

Low voices: Great are thy works, thy creations. Great are thy ways among men.

High voices: Glory to God in the highest—And on earth—Peace.

(Continued on page 33)

¹ Hymn poem by Godfrey Thring, 1873.

² Luke 1:46-55.

³ Isaiah 9:2, 67.

⁴ Micah 4:2-4.

⁵ Isaiah 11:9.

How the Child Learns About God

By DONALD W. MAYNARD*

ONE of the happy privileges of parents is that of guiding their children into satisfying and enriching experiences of God. The significance of the home is enhanced when it is realized that it affords the supreme opportunity to lay the foundation for spiritual insights and appreciations that make life meaningful and zestful. But it is also in this area that many parents are puzzled and confused. With real concern, they ask, "How may we help our children learn about God?" "Are there any general principles to guide us here?"

Perhaps the first suggestion that should be made is that the finest preparation for learning about God is a happy home situation, in which there is a maximum of love and cooperation and a minimum of bickering and misunderstanding. It is in the home that the small child gradually comes to an understanding of the meaning of such terms as love, kindness, dependability and trust. When parents are dependable, fair and wise in their dealing with children, it is not difficult for the children to think of God in these terms. When there is a fine spirit of cooperation and mutual helpfulness among the members of the family, foundations are being laid for an understanding of one's relationship to God. Children can think of God only in terms of their own experiences. Let us in the home, therefore, provide them with experiences that will enable them to understand and appreciate some of the attributes we believe God possesses.

In addition to a home in which love and fairness prevail, children should be in homes in which God is accepted as a vital member of the family group. If this is the case, children as a rule accept the fact of God as naturally as they accept the fact of grandparents. Furthermore, during these years it is the parents' relationship to God that does more to teach the child about him than any amount of direct teaching. When parents spontaneously thank God for the joys and blessings of life, when they ask his guidance in the midst of difficult situations, when they find in him a source of strength when discouraged and disappointed, they are helping to make God a living reality to their children. After all, if we expect our children to have satisfying experiences of God, we must have meaningful fellowship with him.

While we do not want

This article is second in a series on religion in the home which was introduced last month by Professor Vieth. Dr. Maynard draws from his own experience, and that of other parents, practical suggestions for guiding children in their thinking about God.

to force upon a small child the thought of God in such a way as to disturb and confuse him, it is possible to associate God with many happy experiences in the life of the child without producing this confusion. One writer suggests that the child's first experi-

ences with God should be in terms of what he does and wants, rather than in terms of what he is. As parents and children explore the wonders of nature, how natural it will be to thank God for making such a wonderful and interesting world. As the family has happy experiences together, children may be led to realize that God wants us to be happy. Attention may be called to the way in which God cares for people, birds and animals, and children may be shown how God wants their help in caring for others.

When children begin to ask questions, a real teaching opportunity presents itself to parents. These questions frequently reveal where our children are getting their ideas of religion. A four year old child came to his father with the question, "Did Jesus just float up into the sky?" His playmate insisted that he did and the boy wanted to know about it. A small child playing with a sharp pointed stick, when told that it might put out someone's eye, said, "Jesus would heal them." He was making a very natural and practical application of what he had been taught at church school. An eight year old boy came to his father with a question about hell. The little Catholic boy across the street had been giving him some religious instruction! Some of the ideas that children get of God come from pictures in story books or papers; from chance remarks; from hymns.

In answering children's questions, it is well for us to keep in mind the following:

1. Our children will believe implicitly whatever we tell them. Therefore we should answer their questions as

honestly, simply and directly as possible. We should never tell a child that which we do not believe. If we do not know the answer to the questions, let us frankly admit that fact.

2. When we do not know the answer to a question, we have a splendid opportunity to help our children realize that the understanding of God is a growing process that continues throughout life. A father, talking to his five year old boy about some questions he could not answer, said, "Son, there are



Ruth Alexander Nichols

A happy home prepares for teaching about God

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many things about God that we do not know, but as we go through life, we will find out more and more about him. All of us, Mother, Brother, you and I, can help each other know more about God as we find out more about him." Let the search for God be a shared quest among the family group.

3. Sometimes children ask questions upon the spur of the moment that are not of real concern to them.

If the parent is certain that this is the case, and it would be difficult for the child to understand the answer to the question, it may be possible to direct his attention to some experience that is meaningful to him, without leaving him with a sense of frustration because his question has not been answered. We must guard ourselves against using this possibility as an excuse to ignore questions that perplex us but that are of real concern to our children.

4. When we answer children's questions, let us answer them, if possible without raising new ones. The child is usually concerned with a specific question, and not with all the implications that we as adults may see in it. Let us avoid, if possible, discussions that are long and involved, as they tire and confuse the child, while creating more difficulties than they solve.

What are we to do when a child asks us, "Who is God?" "Where is God?" "What is God like?" We will, of course, follow the suggestions concerning questions just given. If these questions are of real concern to the child, we should have some answer to them. If the child has had some of the stories of Jesus and knows something about his love for children, it may be said that God is like Jesus, in that he loves us and wants us to be happy. Care needs to be taken at this point, however, lest the child become confused in his thinking about God and Jesus. If we help him realize that Jesus teaches us about God and tells us what God is like, such confusion should be avoided. Prayers, of course, should be addressed to God, rather than to Jesus.

Since all words develop meaning only in the light of the child's experiences, it would seem desirable to tell a child who has reached the age where he sincerely wants to know who God is, that God is a Spirit. One writer objects to this term because it may suggest ghosts and fairies. This need not necessarily be the case. Others object to this approach because the term "spirit" is too abstract for a child to understand. Certainly it is true that it will be difficult for the child to gain a very clear idea at first as to what the term means. But will not any explanation of God that does not deliberately foster false impressions, be difficult for a child to grasp? Is it not wise to use a term that conforms to Jesus' description of God, and that is capable of infinite refinement? We must explain the term, of course, in as simple terms as possible. It may help to refer to



Scotford photo

Exploring the wonders of nature leads to gratitude

Father or Mother as a spirit that is expressing itself through the body. It is not the body of the mother that loves the child. It is her spirit that loves him. When the child wants to do a loving deed, it is his spirit that prompts him to do it.

While the term spirit may be used as indicated, it would be well to avoid long discussions as to the meaning of the term when the child is first introduced to it. Continue to emphasize what God does and wants, rather than what he is.

And we will not be disturbed if the child continues to think of God in terms of a physical person. But we need to realize that there is a difference in teaching a child that God has a physical body, and in overlooking his anthropomorphic concepts of God. Do not always feel under the necessity of correcting a child's idea that may reflect inadequate understanding of God. At the same time, utilize every opportunity to add meaning to the idea of God as a Spirit. If we do this, the term will come to have increasing meaning to him.

A nine year old boy recently helped answer the questions of his six year old brother concerning a spirit by telling him that our spirit lives in our body in the same way that we live in our house. When the house is worn out, the spirit leaves it. This nine year old boy had been comforted several years ago when his puppy died by the thought of the spirit as something separate from the body. Evidently he has grasped the idea that that in an individual which is real and eternal, is the spirit. To be sure, the term has been and probably still is somewhat puzzling to him. But he is growing in his understanding of the meaning of the term, and therefore, on the ground work of his own experience, is growing in his understanding of God.

Spontaneous and planned worship experiences help children learn about God. A four year old boy had finished decorating a Christmas tree and had asked that all the lights be turned off except the lights on the tree. He stood quietly before the tree with an attitude akin to reverence. The quiet singing of a Christmas carol, or a short prayer of thanks to God for Jesus and for a world in which there is such beauty, would help make God real to a child in such a moment. Two small boys watching the marvelous process of a cicada coming out of its shell and unfolding its wings, affords an opportunity for parents and children to quietly talk about the wonderful world God has given us. Parents who are alert to use such moments for spontaneous worship are helping their children learn about God.

As we help our children learn about God, there will be many times when we will be perplexed and discouraged. But there will also be high moments when chance remarks of our children may reveal to us that God is becoming increasingly meaningful to them. Our own lives will be enriched, because as our children grow, we will grow.

What Kind of Drama in the Church?

A Symposium Defending, and Sometimes Opposing, Three Purposes of Drama

Nearly every church in the country has some form of dramatic activity during the year. But *why*? The purpose may be any one of the following three: financial, to help out in the budget; professional, to uphold artistic standards; or educational, in which is included education in worship. Which of these purposes is justified in the church's program? For this symposium a university instructor in drama opposes the first two purposes and expounds the third. Two persons have been asked to point out the other side regarding the two that are thus criticized. The net result will enlarge and stimulate the thinking of the reader.

For Financial Reasons?

MR. ERICH HARDT, *Instructor in Dramatic Art at New York University*, criticizes the prevalent financial purpose. He says:

"If the club chooses to give a play for financial reasons only, the play must be selected because the largest number of people will be attracted by it; the members of the cast must have a great number of friends and relatives who will come to see them act; and the advance publicity must be of a cheap, commercial type to draw the largest possible house. In any case, the participants must neglect artistic merit, histrionic ability, and consideration of the attitude of sensitive members of the church. Is this worth while?"

A director who has helped many churches make money from plays replies:

At one time I worked for a national play production company. After being trained to solicit advertising and to coach plays, I was sent to towns of varying sizes, to direct local groups in the production of a play which had been booked in advance by one of the company's agents. My task was to select the cast, with the aid of the local committee, trying to include prominent people who would be a drawing card, to promote advertising, and to direct the performance. Admission to the play was charged, half of the receipts going to the local groups and the other half to my company.

This is the type of drama which many church people deplore and which local merchants oppose because it takes money out of the town. They have some good arguments on their side. But in many cases this type of dramatic production can be defended. It provides purposeful recreation for a number of young people who, in towns and small cities, frequently have no organized use of leisure time. It allows adults to use abilities untouched by their occupations and to express themselves in satisfying ways. It provides an audience for talented young people, giving them experience in public performance. If done on an interdenominational basis, as it sometimes is, it gives a rare opportunity for fellowship among people of different churches. A director who comes in from the outside is accepted as having authority and can command obedience and harmony which might not be accorded a local person. A further factor is that a professional director who is giving full time to the activity can put on a performance which is of a high type dramatically and which sets standards for later productions. And, because of the

extensive promotion, the ticket sales are large and the local groups make money for their church work, sometimes in considerable amounts.

Many of the bad features of such a procedure could be eliminated and the good features maintained if a local person who is trained professionally were paid to do the same work and to do it on a full time basis. In this situation there would be no opposition from the business people, the director could demand high standards, and the local group would keep a much larger share of the profits.

A more common type of drama for financial purposes is that put on by groups within a church to raise money for a particular cause. It is entirely possible for this to be done in the manner and spirit decried above by Mr. Hardt. But it is by no means necessary. Some dramatic clubs that have put on cheap comedies year after year, to ever falling receipts, have found better financial results with producing a really fine play. Even when paying a fairly high royalty, such plays bring in more money. People everywhere throughout our country know of plays which have been outstanding on Broadway, and they are glad to pay comparatively high prices to see them, even when given by amateur talent.

Dramatic clubs can, of course, be places of bickering, snobbery, and hard feelings. On the other hand, those who belong are usually interested in drama for its own sake. And when a play is to be given in order to raise money, they feel their responsibility in doing a good job and will cooperate in making the performance as good as possible. These young people and adults are given a concrete opportunity to work for their church and, in the process, develop a tenacious loyalty to it. Moreover, the interest developed by the production of secular plays may be carried over into the giving of plays which have educational and worship value.

For Professional Reasons?

Mr. Hardt goes on to say:

"If the production is to be up to professional standards, the play may or may not be good theatre, depending on the taste and judgment of the committee or person in charge of selecting it; the members of the cast will be good in their respective parts because they are selected on the basis of their acting ability and 'cast to type.' The entire production will come as near to professional standards as the people involved are capable of giving. Whether or not these standards are clear and worth trying to achieve are matters for discussion. Consideration, friendly spirit, and humanity are factors which cannot be thought of, if this method is to succeed. Is this worth while?"

MRS. LEOLA BAILEY, *a director of dramatics who has helped churches raise the quality of the plays which they produce*, replies:

Yes, I think it is worth while to give in the church

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really fine plays, produced "as near to professional standards as the people involved are capable of giving."

There is no good reason why "consideration, friendly spirit and humanity" should be lost sight of in a dramatic club even if these are not virtues commonly found in the commercial theatre. On the contrary, the giving of a successful play in the church demands that every person working on it must give his best. There has to be a strong feeling of cooperation, a desire to work for the highest possible dramatic standards. With this ideal in mind, all those in the organization are willing to "try out" for the different rôles and to accept assignment to the part in which they can make the best contribution to the final production. Young people are greatly fascinated by the thought of working on the stage, and those with small dramatic ability enter wholeheartedly into the less spectacular tasks of property men, scene shifters, lighting technicians, costumers, and the dozen other kinds of employment necessary in producing a play. Naturally a director's personality is important. He must insure a feeling of unity, a feeling that the play is the first thing to be considered, and that petty and selfish ideas should be quickly pushed into the background. The play as a whole must be thought of as a thing of beauty, and each individual must do his best to make it so. This striving together for a single good purpose, in a friendly and companionable way, is a definite builder of character.

The standards of professional performance may not be absolute, but it is not hard to tell a superior play from a poor one. Motion pictures have their deficiencies but they have trained the American people to expect technical excellence. This has made audiences more critical of amateur performances. A cheap play acted poorly by a church group may receive loud applause, but it is probable that this is more an indication of their good will than of their sincere admiration.

It is possible to do excellent dramatic work in a church group. I have seen a young people's organization in a Minneapolis church grow from eighteen people interested in presenting plays, to two hundred who actually put them on. This tremendous growth of the organization was accomplished in less than a year and a half. There was a spirit of togetherness in this group; they worked hard on every play, for the good of the play. Their plays were as close to professional standards as they could make them, and consequently their reputation was city-wide, and the organization became self-supporting. There is also a strong cooperation between this group and other activity groups within the church. In fact, this dramatic club has helped to bind the whole church into a closer unit and a warmer fellowship.

A dramatic organization in a Boston church has perfected its play technique to such a professional standard that they have performed the same beautiful and stirring religious play three nights a week throughout a winter play season, to a capacity crowd. This is unusual, but it can be done.

Some churches make excuses for not having dramatic activity: that it is too much work; that there is not enough available talent; that there is no adequate place for presentation, no lighting equipment, no scenery; and most decisively, that it costs too much money. In the interest of the church itself, these excuses must be broken down. First of all, a newly organized dramatic group within the church should start its work on a small scale. Give a good one-act play, not a three-act. Forget about elaborate sets, or lighting effects, or the type of stage. Concentrate on the acting in a

simple, stirring play. Later, as the organization grows, there is time enough for elaborate and unusual play ideas.

Plays given in the church should uphold the ideals of the church. This does not mean that they should be propagandistic. It does mean that—as is done in the finest plays—they should reveal and encourage the "way of life" which the church sponsors. And certainly one element in such a life is doing each task to the best of one's ability and in the light of Christian principles. Plays performed in such a spirit cannot but add stature to those taking part in them.

For Educational Purposes?

Mr. Hardt defends his thesis that only for educational purposes is the church justified in sponsoring dramatic activities.

When a play is produced in a church for educational purposes, the results are most favorable. Inherently, education is a major function of the church. Naturally, then, any activity based on this fundamental principle is solidly founded and is bound to succeed. We must not confuse this success of spiritual development and growth of mutual understanding with that success a business concern speaks of. The latter deals with increases in finances; the church has always been and must always be concerned with the growth of the soul of its members and of its community. If this growth is to be an ever increasingly important factor in the welfare of society, all the forces of the church must be concentrated to this common end. The dramatic organization is no exception. All of its members must constantly bear in mind that the only path to success is that which we label education. In educational dramatics, we can learn to see both the hindrances and the aids to such development. Progress is so very slow and difficult on this path that many despair and either stand still or take an easier path. Some of our fellow men are hard to convince that this path is right. It is up to those of us who believe in it to prove by quiet deed the virtue of the educational road of life.

An intelligent, progressive group of people with various experiences can be mutually instructive. How well educational dramatics fulfills this requirement! Each actor, technician, director and business man contributes his share of experience and knowledge to the others. Beyond this, the ideals, philosophies and wisdoms of the characters in the play contribute to the mutual development. Thus by a cooperative function, educational drama again has proved its own virtue.

Church societies, because of their belief in education, weave it into the designs of all their useful activities, such as missionary work, charities, and life time service to the church. If the drama is to be of use to the church as these other functions are, it must be able to answer affirmatively to these same prerequisites of service and education.

A production for educational purposes is composed of these elements: a play, chosen because of its educational value as well as its professional quality; the director, a person who will benefit others and himself by the performance of his task; the cast, chosen because each can learn as well as teach in the part; the business staff, chosen because its members will grow through the experience; and the audience, which will be delighted because of a feeling of mutual growth. Thus another step has been taken on the difficult march toward the growth of the soul, for both individuals and the community.



First Methodist Church, Whittier, California

The smallest children like to play on the floor

Experiences in the Nursery Class

By VIOLA M. HOLMES*

How much "teaching" can be done in a nursery class? These records of what went on in one group on two different Sundays give a good picture of quiet leadership. Learning to play together; learning that the church is a happy place in which to be; looking at pictures; feeding birds; thinking about Jesus and about God's gifts,—such experiences can come even "to the least of these."

Using Pictures

WHEN the Leader entered the nursery class room, Eva, aged four years, was there with her younger brother, aged two years, who had not been in the class before. They were sitting by Helen, the assistant teacher, but looked up when the Leader came in.

Eva: This is Harold.

Leader (Going over to Harold): I am glad you came to our nursery class, Harold.

Harold said nothing but smiled and went on with his investigation of the toy chest. When all of the toys were out of the chest and on the floor, he let down the hinged cover and climbed on top to look at a picture of birds eating crumbs which had been thrown in the snow.

Harold (Pointing to the birds): Birds? Snow?

Leader (Who had joined Harold in order to look at the picture also): Yes, the children gave the birds their breakfast. Shall we feed the birds?

Eva: I want to feed the birds, too.

Eva ran for her coat and put it on as is the rule when we open the window to throw out the crumbs.

Leader: Here is your coat, Harold.

Harold shook his head and ran to the farthest corner of the room.

Leader: We wear our coats when we feed the birds.

Harold still refused to put on the coat so the leader laid it on a chair and said nothing more. She put on her own coat and was just opening the window when Joyce, aged two years, came in.

Leader: Joyce, you are just in time to feed the birds. Come and help us throw out the crumbs for the birds and then we will take off your coat.

When Eva and Joyce began to throw out the crumbs, Harold became interested, and started for the window. The

Leader noticed him and picked up his coat.

Leader: Harold, do you want to put on your coat and help feed the birds?

Harold nodded his head, put on his coat and joined the group at the window.

Eva: Where are the birds?

Leader: I think the birds are looking for their breakfast. When they see our crumbs, they will eat them.

The children scattered the crumbs, which had been prepared in advance, and watched for birds. Unfortunately there were none in sight.

The Leader closed the window and Harold and Eva slipped off their coats. When they noticed that Joyce still had on all of her wraps, they began to help her. Eva took off her overshoes and mittens while Harold unfastened the zippers on her leggings. He pointed to Joyce's socks and shoes, naming them and then pointed to his own. He seemed quite impressed with the fact that Joyce wore socks and shoes as well as he.

Norma, aged three years, then came in announcing that she could take off her things by herself, and she proceeded to do so. She joined the other children in a game of toss and catch with a gay colored print bag stuffed with paper.

Harold again climbed on the chest to look at the picture of the birds. As before, the leader joined him but said nothing.

Harold: Birds eat crumbs? Birds in snow?

Leader: Yes, the birds are eating breakfast.

Harold then noticed a framed picture "Christ Blessing Little Children," by Plockhorst, hanging above the bird picture. He stood on the chest in order to see it better. The other three children also climbed on the chest to look at the picture.

Eva: I see some sheep.

Norma: There's a baby.

Leader: I see some flowers.

Eva: I like the blue flowers.

The children watched silently for a

few moments. All stood reverently looking at the picture.

Leader (Pointing to Jesus in the picture): This is Jesus.

Eva (Doubtfully): Don't we have another picture of Jesus?

Leader: Do you mean the picture of Baby Jesus? Here is the picture of Baby Jesus. (Getting the picture "Nativity," by Baroccio, from the supply cabinet) This is the Baby Jesus. That is the Man Jesus.

Norma: There are sheep in this picture, too.

Eva: The flowers are in the other picture.

The children stood quietly, looking first at one picture and then the other. The leader sang softly, "Little Baby Jesus" from *Nursery Class Teaching* by Mary Edna Lloyd and "When Jesus Walked this Earth of Ours," from *Song and Play for Children*. Once when the children were not talking, the leader said, "Thank you, God, for the flowers."

Soon the children scattered to other parts of the room and started other activities. Joyce brought a book to Helen to read to her and Norma also went over to listen. Eva played with the doll. Harold played with the blocks, not doing anything in particular with them except to handle them over.

Playing Together

HELEN was in the room with Philip, Suzanne, and Mildred, all of whom are four years old, when the leader arrived. Four year olds do not seem to think a formal greeting necessary, so the children went on with their play.

Philip (Playing with the big blocks): See what I am doing. This is something like a tower, only different. It's a building.

Leader: That looks like the office building where I work.

Suzanne (Getting the box of dishes
(Continued on page 33))

* Nursery superintendent, Grace Methodist Church, Nassau, New York.

Rural Parish

FROM THE JOURNAL OF A RURAL MINISTER'S WIFE*

October 25

At the Auburn Ladies Aid I was telling Mrs. Stetson about the scrapbooks the Gorman Junior Leaguers are making for the hospital.

"You work with that group, too?" she asked.

"Surely; they meet at the parsonage on Mondays."

"Your job's like a farmer's wife's, isn't it; your husband's work doesn't amount to much unless you do your share too."

I was reminded of that today when eager little Pearl came bounding at me in Tensville. "We're going to have a Girl Scout troop just like the boys have," she announced, "and we're going on hikes and cook and everything. And you and Mrs. McCoy are going to be leaders."

It wasn't a false alarm either, for tonight at the church Mrs. McCoy came over to me. "Do you know anything about Girl Scouts?"

"Only what I learned by being one once," I replied.

"Good! The girls are eager to have a troop. We're meeting Friday at my home."

Edward and I felt as though that were a real triumph. It's the first time since we've known the village a constructive idea has sprung in the community without the seed being sown and tended by outside leadership.

November 7

Autumn is in the height of its glory, and it's time to dress our houses for winter. This morning after church at Auburn we found the car full of bittersweet culled from the Hehman's lake shore woods and put there by a child who hasn't known enough of family care and friendship.

November 17

"What can you do? Tensville's a goin' to the dogs an' it's goin' pretty fast, I tell ya."

"I'll say. All the youngsters in town, even young mothers with babes in arms, sittin' around at the dances in the Hall, drinkin' and carryin' on when they should be at church meetin's."

"Reverend, it don't do no good to talk. They won't listen to you."

The adult midweek discussion group was in session again in Tensville. For several weeks last summer, no matter where the discussion had begun, it had ended in a discouraged criticism of the young people and the town dances.

"Is there anything else in town for the young folks to do?" I couldn't any longer restrain the question.

"Well, no—jus' the adult Bible class and church," was the inevitable reply.

What a contrast between that hopeless discussion two months ago and tonight's joy: twenty eager young people, many of whom the church had not before reached, hiking through the woods, the harvest moon sinking in the southwest and the eerie northern lights playing across the north sky. A camp fire in the meadow beyond the trees, a group united by the glowing fire, singing into the darkness, laugh-

ter and fun for all, without their accepted corollaries—drinking and dancing!

During our first few evenings of games and songs in the church it was hard to reach all of the young people. But little by little we have gained their confidences and friendships. "Games tonight?" ask the group of waiting boys as we drive up to the church on Friday afternoon. An affirmative answer is followed by their eager chorus, "It's Church Night tonight"—and by means of the proverbial grape-vine telegraph, the countryside is informed.

World Conference at Madras

FIFTY DELEGATES from North America will attend the decennial conference of the International Missionary Council at Madras, India, in December. The total number of delegates is 450. They will come from sixty-three nations and will represent more than 350 million non-Roman Catholic Christians in the most representative gathering of churchmen held in modern times. Fully half of the elected delegates will come from the non-Western churches and will represent Asia, Africa, Latin America and the islands scattered over the seas, in numbers equal to those from Europe, the British Isles and North America. This is something new and significant in religious conferences. Ten years ago, when the International Missionary Council called 250 delegates from fifty nations to meet on the Mount of Olives outside the Holy City, only twenty-five per cent came from the churches in mission lands. Last summer in the truly great meetings at Oxford and Edinburgh, a mere handful of Orientals and only one or two Latin Americans represented the younger churches.

The Madras meeting will be epoch making if preparations for such a conference have any significance. For more than three years literally thousands of Christians in three score nations have been giving their best thought to an evaluation of the Christian movement in these various countries, with the purpose of discovering what contribution each might make to the theme to be discussed at Madras. The earnestness of the men and women who have been digging into this task is well illustrated by the fifteen delegates from Java who for nearly a year and a half have been studying English in order to be able to carry on their part of the discussion in that language.

Primary attention at Madras will focus on the Church. What is the nature of the Church? What is its function in society? What in its inner life makes it a vital institution for men? What contribution is it making in the midst of a changing social and economic order? What witness does it bear to individual and group life? And what progress has it made through cooperative efforts and union undertakings?

These main subjects will be discussed in sixteen sections. Section seven deals with religious education as part of the inner life of the Church; section eight with the training of laymen and ministers; section eleven with "an adequate program for Christian literature"; and section sixteen with "cooperation and unity." It is confidently expected that from the thoughtful consideration of the educational tasks in the light of their world wide significance, will come new vision and fresh inspiration.

* Actual excerpts from diary written a year ago. Further experiences will be related in coming months.

We Could Do That!

One way to get a thrill out of church school work is to have at least one experiment under way all the time. "We never did that before" is a dare to try something rather than a reason for keeping to the old (and dull) ways.

Not Enough Bible?

The parents of primary children in one church complained that their children weren't getting enough Bible. Instead of defending the life-centered curriculum which was in use, the primary superintendent and teachers asked the parents to come to a conference to help plan the courses for the following year. This proved to be rather a large order and more than one conference was required.

The first step was to discuss the purpose of the church school in the primary grades. The respective functions of home and church in religious education were considered. The resources available for accomplishing the purpose were surveyed. Numerous courses of various types were reviewed to discover their strong and weak features. The parents discovered that the courses already in use dealt with the Bible more than they had supposed. They also came to realize that only limited portions of the Bible have vital meaning for primary children. The outcome was a plan to supplement the regular lessons with carefully selected biblical memory work which the parents agreed to supervise. Also a joint parent-teacher committee was set up to make a continuous study of the curriculum and make selections or adaptations from time to time which were mutually satisfactory.

Unifying Worship

There is general recognition that the principle of gradation can be applied with such thoroughness as to injure the church school by dividing it into a series of "water tight" compartments. Various types of unified services or unified programs, some of which are chiefly a mere schedule adjustment, are being tried to escape the divisive effects of gradation. Unity is being sought in quite a different way by a plan used in the Christian Church School of Ocean Park, California.

The plan provides for unity through the use of worship themes which are common to all the departments, and are adapted, in materials used, to the capacities and experiences of those in each department. The themes involve more than worship programs since they actually embody themes or emphases in the whole life of the congregation. The themes or emphases are worked out a quarter at a time in advance by the Workers' Conference in consultation with the minister and Board of Officers. Thus they express what the total leadership of the church considers important and desirable.

Having been determined upon in this democratic manner, the themes are accepted as the determining factor in much of the program, particularly that involving worship. The pastor uses them as a basis for his preaching program. Each departmental staff uses them as the basis for department worship programs. They are suggestive as to the religious life of the family. They help to carry major seasonal emphases of the congregation, such as the decision for Christ

Others are sharing their experiments with you on this page. Why not share yours with them? Write it up and send it today. Also, any problems? Send them along. This page is yours!

at Easter time and stewardship during November.

Under the general theme "Jesus the Way of Life" eight weekly general themes were suggested.

General suggestions were made as to the materials and content under each theme, but the leaders of each age-group developed the general idea in their own way, adapting the topic itself, and selecting appropriate materials.

Among the results are: A greater sense of unity and co-operation among the workers, common and hearty support for certain general church-wide objectives, increased interest in and attendance upon the church preaching service on the part of the church school constituency, valuable discussion and planning of the general emphases and objectives of the church as a whole, an increased feeling of participation in the life of the church by the younger persons.

The Superintendent's Talk

"When we used to use Uniform Lessons throughout and have a general assembly of the school, the superintendent's talk to the whole school, usually related to the day's lesson, was of great inspirational value. Also it gave him an important contact with the whole school. How can the superintendent in the graded school have this contact? If there is opportunity for a talk what should be its theme? Where can the superintendent get help in preparing such talks?"

In the modern church school the superintendent is not primarily a platform man. Rather he is the supervisor of a working staff of departmental leaders and teachers. His best service is not one of direct contribution to the members of the school en masse but is in improving the quality of work being done by his staff. If he has the ability to inspire and motivate them in their service, he may be sure that he is thereby making a contribution to the morale of the whole school. It may not be as immediate and apparent as the response to a talk before the general assembly. It may, however, be of more lasting and deeper significance.

It is desirable for the general superintendent to be known by the pupils and to have direct contact with them. Both general superintendent and pastor represent and symbolize the larger Christian fellowship of the whole church of which the individual class and department member should be conscious. Satisfactory progress from department to department and entrance into the full life of the church as a Christian community demand that the Sunday school shall make available for each of its members an "experience of churchmanship." It is well then for the general superintendent to have contact with each department from time to time. Freed from responsibility for a general assembly, he may well have part in departmental programs through arrangements provided by department leaders. These contacts with age-groups, while not frequent, may be highly effective if appropriately used.

The general superintendent's talk, either as departments invite him or as occasional general assemblies give oppor-

tunity, should emphasize the broader objectives and policies of the school. Such themes as the following would emerge naturally out of the life of any live and progressive church school: "Learning Christian Living," "The Spiritual Output of Our School (or Department)," "Too Good to Keep" (on Christian witnessing), "Our School or Your School" (on individual responsibility and cooperativeness), "The Community Outreach of Our School," "The Spiritual Tone of Our School," "Home and Church, Partners."

A Christian Christmas

• By CLIFFORD R. STETSON*

AN ARTICLE, "Is Christmas a Christian Festival?" in the *International Journal* for November, 1936, scattered the seed which bore fruit in a community Christmas celebration that was truly Christian, in our town in 1937.

Middleport is a typical village of fifteen hundred population in the fruit section of western New York, with Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist and Universalist churches, the usual lodges, a good high school, no theater or picture show. There was plenty of community spirit during the boom years, but very little since. The American Legion and Auxiliary had taken the lead in welfare work at the holiday season, but had found it difficult to raise the necessary funds.

At Christmas time there was always the mad rush of parties and Christmas trees in school, lodges and churches, until it was impossible to get the whole of any one group together on any particular night, and many of the children went from one party to another and were stuffed until they lost all sense of enjoyment.

Last fall a few of us began talking Community Christmas. The principal of the high school, the Girl Scout leader, pastors of all churches and representatives of lodges and village board pledged their support, and a general committee was appointed, with all groups represented. There were fifteen members of this committee, and later it was increased to twenty. Sub-committees were elected to handle publicity, finance, street decorations and the Community Christmas Tree, welfare, children's party (sub-divided into entertainment, refreshment, and gifts), pageant and carolling.

Merchants were asked to contribute five dollars, lodges and churches ten or fifteen. The response was surprisingly generous, and many individuals contributed, also, though no solicitation was made. The total budget raised was \$550.90, nearly twice as much as we at first expected to raise.

Six-foot trees were placed along the main streets, and a big tree in the park. Light strings and wiring had to be bought, so the expense for the decorating was higher this year than we had planned, but we have a hundred and fifty dollars worth of equipment for next year.

The Welfare Committee reached all families in need of help, giving orders on local stores, instead of the customary baskets. In most cases this proved entirely satisfactory.

Groups of carollers, made up of Girl Scouts, high school students and adults, sang along the main streets at dusk every evening during Christmas week, and on Christmas

Discussions in the Workers' Conference, interviews with individual leaders, conferences with the pastor, would be the best sources from which to secure themes like these, and something to say about them. Plans for program improvement, for securing more regular attendance, for discovering and enlisting new members, and for special seasonal emphases may well be the occasion and theme for such talks. Of course regular reading of such magazines as the *International Journal* is fruitful of suggestion.

Eve sang for all shut-ins throughout the village. They also joined with the high school band in leading community singing around the Christmas tree before the pageant.

The Children's Party was held Thursday afternoon, the 23rd, in the Universalist Parish Hall. This was arranged to take the place of the multitude of parties usually given by the different groups. And the cooperation was surprisingly general. Only a few groups insisted on holding separate parties, and these were kept simple in the extreme. The four churches, being in the forefront of the planning from the first, gladly gave over their usual parties, holding separately only the religious services on Christmas Sunday.

Practically every child in the village and as many mothers as could get into the hall (over four hundred altogether) enjoyed the operetta, "When the Toys Came to Life," presented by the grade children, and a few other recitations and songs. Then Santa Claus arrived, and after the distribution of gifts, toys, candy, etc., each child was given an ice cream cup. Children were seated by grades with their teachers, and everything was handled with surprisingly little confusion. But oh, the hall when they left!

The pageant, "The Logos," by Marjorie Lacey-Baker, was a climax the community will long remember. It was hoped that it might be given out-of-doors, but was taken into the Methodist Church because many were afraid to remain outside in the cold. The pageant is a simple but marvelously effective arrangement of the old story, with no speaking except the Prologue. But the costumes (kindly loaned us through friends), the lighting, and especially the invisible chorus which gave the atmosphere to each episode by use of the familiar hymns, all combined to produce an effect of indescribable beauty. More than five hundred persons were present, and already the committee has received many requests that this pageant be made a regular feature of the Christmas observance each year.

It is the custom of many Protestants, as well as the Catholic members of the community, to attend the Midnight Mass. This year the attendance and spirit were better than ever. The priest made gracious acknowledgment of his personal satisfaction that *all* people of the village had so freely entered into the celebration of the Christ Child's birth in this cooperative manner.

Those who have said community spirit was lacking here have had to swallow their words. As usual the need was for leadership. And those who have taken the lead in this venture have been more than repaid for their efforts by the satisfaction of having helped to make this season in Middleport a truly Christian Christmas.

* Pastor, Universalist Churches, Middleport and Ridgeway, New York.

The Topaz of Ethiopia

By EDITH L. SQUIRES* and ELIZABETH H. EMERSON†

PROLOG

(To be spoken in front of the curtain by a young woman)

In that far-away day of which we sing, when three men who represented the wisdom of the earth, followed a guiding star from their desert meeting-place to the little town of Bethlehem, one carried as his gift to the new king a nugget of pure gold—newly mined, heavy, shining. The rich vari-colored robes of the second gave forth the sweet perfume of frankincense as his camel plodded across the hot sands; for such was his gift to the king. The third wise man, Balthazar by name, who came from the Nile country, modestly showed his companions a small box of myrrh, over whose spicy fragrance they exclaimed. Of the other gift, fastened securely in a fold of the lining of his inner garment, he said nothing. Too precious, it seemed, for the close scrutiny and appraisal of his fellow travelers. If he should show it to them, there would be endless discussion as to its source, its material value and its renowned powers. This he could not endure. He would find a way, when they found the one they sought, to slip it unseen into his hand with a whispered word.

The yellow topaz which Balthazar regarded with so great care had come out of Ethiopia, and was of the peculiar kind found only in that land. When he had gained possession of it he had also gained knowledge of its strange power over men. It was said, and Balthazar had no trouble in believing, that he who touched the shining stone, was given such complete understanding of his fellow men that strife and unkindness were no longer possible. Indeed, Balthazar, with his wise man's value of truth, had tested the powers of the jewel and found them not wanting. Often on the journey toward Jerusalem while the other men slept, he took the stone from its secret place and held it in his hand, admiring its beauty by the light of the stars, and contemplating long the value such a stone would have for one who was to become a ruler of nations amid all the deceit and wickedness of the nations of the earth. Surely no one else could make so good a use of it.

After the visit to Bethlehem, the finding of the new-born child in his lowly surroundings, the delivery of the gifts, and the flight from the scheming Herod, as Balthazar rode toward the Nile country, he wondered whether he had been wise in parting with the precious stone. It had been easy enough to slip it, unobserved, into the hand of the child's mother. She had smiled and said to the three, "These gifts you bring I shall keep safely against the day my son shall need them." But now it seemed almost

a foolish thing that he had done—to give the Topaz of Ethiopia to an infant lying in its mother's arms. The stone would certainly rest unused, perhaps untouched, for many years. Who could tell? It might even be lost before it had been of any good in the world.

Back in his home, surrounded by his books, even graver doubts assailed this man of wisdom. Kneeling in the stable by his companions, with the sweet face of the mother looking in rapture upon her young child—the story of the shepherds in his ears, the star shining above Bethlehem—it had been easy to believe that the child was to be a king—a king of kings. But alone, at home, the experience seemed far away and unreal. He lived too far from Jerusalem to know certainly of the events of the next thirty years. Rumors reached him, when he was an old man, that all was not well. He heard that a man who claimed to be king had been crucified. He was troubled at the thought, "Could this have come to the one he had once honored with his gifts and exalted hopes?"

And then one night when Balthazar knew that his days upon the earth were few, he dreamed—not the hurried, broken dream of youth, but the quiet, peaceful dream of age. In his vision, the years, yea, the centuries to come unrolled before him and through all of time and space there moved one whose face he could never see. Balthazar knew then, that he had made no error, for he saw in this one's hand, the precious topaz! From country to country, from city to city, from age to age the One passed, carrying with him always the yellow stone. To those who touched it, in any clime or time, there came understanding, forgiveness of wrongs and peace. A great joy came to the heart of the old man. Not in vain had he made the long journey to the Judean country. The story of the death of the man who claimed kingship, that must have been false! He lived! And the Topaz of Ethiopia¹ was yet potent!

As he watched, the unrolling scroll of time and space seemed to stop. Before his astonished eyes appeared a room, people of strange dress and speech, and to his ears came the sound of beautiful music.

(As the last words are spoken, there is heard the song "We Three Kings of Orient Are" played or sung with increasing volume, until the rise of the curtain a moment or two later.)

Characters

As they appear

CHARLIE KELLAND, station agent of Milltown
A TRAVELER
EZRA HAMMERSTEIN, formerly of Germany

¹ The title is taken from Job 28:19. The play is based, not upon any known legend, but upon an imaginary one.

LEAH HAMMERSTEIN, his daughter
HASHIMURA OBATA, formerly of Yokohama
TOM HARRIS, a workman
MRS. HARRIS, his wife
MRS. TRUSLOW CALDWELL, of Chicago
FOUR GIRLS (of ten age)

Scene

The waiting room of the way-station of Milltown on a main line to Chicago. It is Christmas Eve. The sun has just set. There is a door to street at right. At back is the ticket-window, somewhat to right of center. At left of ticket-window is door into Charlie's office. The door to the train platform is at left, well toward the back. Beyond it is a long bench. Not far from this bench is a stove with two well-worn wooden chairs by it. There is a bench on the opposite side, beyond door to street. There are kerosene lamps on either side of the ticket window, and beyond the right on back wall there hangs a large train schedule.

THE PLAY

As the curtain rises, CHARLIE KELLAND, an alert, rather attractive young man, is standing back of the ticket window, looking over a newspaper and whistling a Christmas carol. The door at right opens and there is a sudden flash, like the flash made by a photograph taken in darkness, as the TRAVELER enters. He is a man of good height, wearing a long dark robe, belted with a cord, and a dark hood which conceals his face. His movements upon the stage are such that his face is never seen. CHARLIE regards him with unconcealed astonishment, as he approaches the window.

TRAVELER (*Speaking in a deep resonant voice*): My friend, I have something to entrust to your care.

CHARLIE: Sure. You can leave anything here you want to. It's safe enough in this little burg. There ain't any sneak thieves around here.

TRAVELER (*Laying down a small white box on the ticket-shelf*): Then I shall leave this with you, my friend, to be guarded and kept safe until I call for it.

CHARLIE: Say, what you giving me? A Christmas present?

TRAVELER: The box contains the Topaz of Ethiopia. Use it as you wish while I am away. (*He pushes the box toward the astounded and open-mouthed CHARLIE and goes out at right, swiftly.*)

CHARLIE (*Picking up the box and looking it over*): Well of all the nuts! (*He opens the box and sees a pale yellow stone. He does not remove it from the box but stands looking at it.*) Well! (*The telephone rings.*)

CHARLIE (*Taking down receiver*): Hello. Yeah, Kelland. (*He listens attentively, his face showing slight surprise and concern*) 28? Anybody hurt? An hour or two? O.K. I'll hold em.

* Richmond, Indiana.

† Las Vegas, New Mexico.

(He comes out and puts coal in the stove, again whistling a Christmas song. As he leaves the room and is seen through the ticket-window, HAMMERSTEIN walks in at right, carrying a suitcase. He is a small, short, middle-aged Jew, with a kindly troubled face and rather shabby clothes. He goes to the window and addresses Charlie. His accent is decidedly German.)

HAMMERSTEIN: Good day sir. There has been a slight accident.

CHARLIE: Yeah. Freight cars piled up. Lucky nobody hurt.

HAMMERSTEIN: The car is quite cold. The conductor told me that I might wait here.

CHARLIE: Sure that's all right. You just make yourself comfortable. Good fire. Pull that chair over.

HAMMERSTEIN (Whose eyes have fastened upon the jewel upon the window ledge, drops his suitcase and reaches for the box): May I inquire what is this?

CHARLIE (With a quick motion pulling the box back and holding it, looking at the Jew with distrust): Say, what's the idea?

HAMMERSTEIN: I am very sorry. I have lately kept a small shop of strange curios. It is my business to become familiar with precious stones. (He speaks with the greatest politeness and much use of hands.)

CHARLIE (Pushing the box toward him but keeping his hand upon it): Well, there it is. You tell me what it is!

HAMMERSTEIN (His hands showing that they itch to touch it): Yes. It is a strange stone; a very remarkable stone, I think. If I might hold it in my hand—

CHARLIE (Looking him over, shoving the box toward him, but keeping his eyes fixed upon it): O.K.

HAMMERSTEIN (As he lifts the stone, feels the weight of it and holds it between his eye and the light, his face changes slightly, losing some of its troubled expression. He drops the stone back into its box. He speaks as if to himself): Strange! Very strange!

CHARLIE: What's strange?

HAMMERSTEIN (Hesitating): It is a hard thing to express in words the changes that take place in one's heart, my friend. There is some power in this stone—

CHARLIE: Another nut!

HAMMERSTEIN: I speak the truth. (He starts to turn away, as if hurt.)

CHARLIE: Say, what you think the thing's worth?

HAMMERSTEIN (Shrugging): That— is impossible to say. As stones are judged, perhaps five hundred dollars.

CHARLIE: Say, you don't mean this little thing is worth five hundred bucks?

HAMMERSTEIN: I think in any market it would be so valued. (He stands in thought for an instant and almost whispers.) But if it is the Topaz of Ethiopia, it is priceless!

CHARLIE: Oh, quit your kidding.

HAMMERSTEIN: The Topaz of Ethiopia is the touchstone of wisdom and understanding. From my honored father I have heard of this treasure. He heard of it from his father before him. The story of

this stone has been told in all ages and in many lands. The hope of seeing and touching it—this had never entered my heart! (He puts out his hand and touches it reverently.)

CHARLIE (Really interested, drawing the box to him, looking closely at the stone and putting the box in his pocket): You don't say! Well I hope it don't strike me as it's struck you. Move up to the fire and get warm. It's a cold Christmas.

HAMMERSTEIN (picks up his suitcase and goes to the stove, sits by the fire, rubbing his hands, thinking. Sometimes he glances at CHARLIE standing by the window, leafing through some papers. He is restless and at last goes again to the window.)

HAMMERSTEIN: Once again, may I look upon the stone?

CHARLIE (Handing it to him): Sure. (He looks at the Jew as if certain he is insane.)

HAMMERSTEIN (Turning with the jewel in his hand so that he faces front he shows great exaltation of spirit. His face gradually lights. This may come in part from a well-regulated artificial light but the greater part of the change must come from within. He speaks to himself): Blessed be Jehovah!

CHARLIE (Utterly astonished): What?

HAMMERSTEIN: The Lord is gracious unto me!

CHARLIE (To himself): Now I know the old Jew's dippy! Here, let's have that stone! (He dashes out to HAMMERSTEIN and takes the box. HAMMERSTEIN hands it back without a change of expression.) What's the matter with you, anyway?

HAMMERSTEIN: My daughter! My daughter, Leah!

CHARLIE: Well, what about her?

HAMMERSTEIN: She has gone from me.

CHARLIE: Is she dead?

(CHARLIE shakes the ashes from the stove and the two stand near it.)

HAMMERSTEIN: No, not dead. But great trouble came upon me. First the mother of Leah was taken by death. She was the light of my life. Then our home, our lands and all that we had was taken away.

CHARLIE: The government saw to that, I guess.

HAMMERSTEIN: To leave my country—the country of my fathers—tears were my meat day and night! We came here almost without bread, my daughter and I. But these two hands, and this brain—they are the gifts of Jehovah. I found work to do. I obtained a small shop in which I have collected beautiful things of the earth—a few pieces of art, rare cloth, precious stones.

CHARLIE (foot on stove, elbow on knee): What became of the girl?

HAMMERSTEIN: I had no time for the instruction of my daughter, and I left it to others, some of them not of our people. She grew tall and lovely, like the daughters of Zion. She began to ridicule my Jewish ways. She neglected our Sabbath, our prayers, the proper preparation of food, the washings, the fastings.

CHARLIE: I can't blame her. Sounds like foolishness to me.

HAMMERSTEIN (Speaking very slowly,

as if reasoning): No, it is not foolishness.

CHARLIE: What did she do? Run away?

HAMMERSTEIN: Not in the way you think. I drove her away, speaking with harsh words. I said in my anger, "If my God is not your god, you are no longer my daughter."

CHARLIE: Well, I never knew anybody could get that heated up about religion!

HAMMERSTEIN: Our laws and our traditions are full of meaning for us who are older. (Very thoughtfully) But perhaps to those who are young they are not so important. Since I have seen the topaz, I know that the love between father and daughter is of more value than all laws and ceremonies! Ah! That is priceless!

CHARLIE (Straightening up and starting back to his office, the box in his hand): Well, what you goin' to do about it?

HAMMERSTEIN: I am going to study to learn what is the best way to find my daughter.

(He sits down by the stove and is lost in thought. In a moment CHARLIE appears at the window, drops the box on the ledge, writes busily for a minute, stops, opens the box and looks at it intently. He glances at the Jew. His expression says plainly, "What is happening here? Is there something unusual about this stone?")

(OBATA enters. He is a very good-looking Japanese, a trifle over-dressed. In the lapel of his coat he wears a sprig of holly, bright with berries. He smiles a great deal and has a most important bearing. When he speaks it is in a high voice, with language which shows he is uneducated. He walks to the window.)

OBATA: I walk up from train. I wait here?

CHARLIE: Oh sure. That's all right. (With a jerk of his thumb toward Hammerstein, who does not seem to notice that anyone has entered) We're makin' a collection of foreigners here.

OBATA: Me? I no foreigner! I come from Japan fifteen years ago. Been American ten years. Me—I celebrate Christmas, same as you. (He touches the holly on his coat. He sees the topaz and reaches for it, his eyes shining.)

CHARLIE: Oh no you don't!

OBATA (Very pleasantly): A most beautiful stone! Where you get it?

CHARLIE: Oh, a fellow left it here a while ago. He must have been a half-wit—

OBATA: I will buy it of you!

CHARLIE: How much?

HAMMERSTEIN (At once alert): The Topaz of Ethiopia is worth very much money. No—it is beyond price.

OBATA (Looking at Hammerstein): Much money which you do not have? (He laughs at his own joke and turns again to CHARLIE) This Sheeny—he talks—what you say? In his hat! I will give you twenty-five large dollars!

CHARLIE: I'm not sellin' for any twenty-five dollars. The Jew here, says it's worth five hundred.

(HAMMERSTEIN has arisen and gone toward the two)

OBATA (Sputtering): Five hundred dollars! I think, if I may remark, that

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The City with Its Problems

What Are the Facts?

MANY home missions study groups in our churches this year will be studying the problems of cities and the tasks of the Christian churches suggested by such problems. The little paper bound, illustrated booklet, *Urban Scene*,¹ by Margueritte Harmon Bro will stimulate vital discussion. This article will present some of its factual materials in the hope that youth and adult groups may be prompted to deal at greater length with these problems, using *Urban Scene* and similar sources of information.

City Gangs. Large cities are characterized by areas of disorganization which develop around the center of the city business district. There one finds the cheaper business places, crowded rooming houses, tenements and poor homes. Crowded conditions mean lack of play space, and children and youth are forced to play in streets and alleys, as shown in the accompanying picture taken from *Urban Scene*. This means the formation of gangs. Areas of disorganization have a high rate of juvenile delinquency. Jane Addams once said, "By all means let us preserve the safety of the home, but let us also make safe the street in which the majority of our young people find their recreation and form their permanent relations."

Bad Housing. A 1934 government survey of 2,600,000 dwellings in 64 cities reported that 16.8 per cent of the houses were crowded or worse, 13.5 per cent of the homes lacked private indoor toilets, 20.2 per cent of the houses had neither bathtubs nor showers, 8.1 per cent of the houses lacked modern lighting, and 5.0 per cent of the houses were without running water.

Studies of a large middle-western city show that in the two highest rent areas, the general death rate was only 7.2 per 1,000, but that in the two lowest rent areas it was 15 per 1,000. In the low income areas as compared with the high income areas the population was almost four times as dense, there were more than eight times as many boy delinquents, and the infant mortality rate was twice as high. The survey of a slum area in this same city showed that 2.5

per cent of the city's population making up this area produced 21 per cent of the murders, 26 per cent of the prostitution, 10 per cent of the illegitimate births, and 12 per cent of the deaths from tuberculosis. A large proportion of the city's budget for police protection, health work, relief, and fire protection was used for the slum area.

Urban Scene reports that slums as a whole have 33 per cent of the city's population, 40 per cent of all births, 75 per cent of the illegitimate children, 41 per cent of all deaths, 52 per cent of all deaths in infancy, 53 per cent of all relief cases, 60 per cent of all dependent children, 63 per cent of the tuberculosis, 64 per cent of the deaths from syphilis, and 66 per cent of the delinquents.

Unemployment.

About 84.7 per cent of our unemployed live in cities, a majority of them being manual workers, but an increasingly high per cent of the unemployed in cities are those who formerly were professional men or who held the so-called white-collar jobs. The unemployed in cities include many unemployable, among whom are the crippled, blind, mentally defi-

cient, and aged. The problem of unemployment in cities is so great that State and Federal aid is necessary to alleviate the suffering. This is a good illustration of how the problems of cities are the problems of all citizens, and how rural and urban life are interdependent.

Alcohol Problem. The consumption of distilled liquor has greatly increased in recent years. In 1936, for the United States as a whole, the consumption was approximately two and a half quarts for every individual; about 13 gallons of beer were consumed per person. It is reported that in New York state the increase in drunken driving for 1936 was 71 per cent over 1933. Saloons, night clubs, cocktail rooms, taxi-dance halls, and gambling places have greatly increased in cities. About \$100,000,000 a year is spent by the liquor industry on advertising.

Other Problems. The problems mentioned above are but a few of many that one finds in our modern cities. There are the problems of relief; of race discrimination in employment, in the use of public recreation centers or of hospitals; of

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Children's Aid Society

¹ Friendship Press, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City, 25 cents.



Suggestions for Building DECEMBER WORSHIP PROGRAMS



PRIMARY DEPARTMENT

By Margaret Sherwood Ward*

THEME FOR DECEMBER: *Happiness and Joy at Christmastime*

For the Leader

In a very special way Christmas belongs to children. Highly imaginative and wonder-loving as all primary-age children are, they find keen delight in the sights, sounds, smells, and secretcies of Christmas festivities. Worship may be very real and spontaneous amid flickering candles, fragrant Christmas greens, familiar carols, the beauty and reverence of Christmas pictures and the stories of the first Christmas Day. Every primary leader should be aware that in the ever-increasing emphasis on the secular and commercial celebration of this holiday season, with its accompanying confusion and nerve strain, children may be in danger of losing the true, spiritual significance of the day. In all the experiences planned for the department program, the leader will be seeking to guide the children to discover that the reason we feel happiness and joy at Christmas time is because it is the birthday of Jesus, God's gift of love to the world, and that the best way to remember his birthday is to please him by finding ways of sharing happiness and joy with others.

Suggested Emphases

FIRST SUNDAY: *"Why Do Bells for Christmas Ring?"*

SECOND SUNDAY: *It's Loving-Giving Time*

THIRD SUNDAY: *Sharing Christmas Joy*

FOURTH SUNDAY: *The First Christmas Day*

Activities Which May Lead to Worship Experiences

Much of the department worship this month may and should be informal in character. The leader should be sensitive to those brief moments during many of the department activities when the children will readily respond with a thank-you prayer to God for his gift, a favorite Christmas song, or a Bible verse, poem, or story recalled.

1. Carrying out plans for making the primary room beautiful at Christmastime. This may include making decorations for their tree or bringing them from home, going to the woods or store for Christmas greens, selecting appropriate pictures from the picture-file, making their own drawings or posters of the Christmas stories.

2. Arranging a Christmas worship center. This should be especially beautiful. A crèche or manger scene is a favorite

with many primary children. A simple one can be made by the older children, or the figures and stable may be purchased at the five-and-ten cent store. The lovely cardboard Christ-Child Crèche by Maud and Miska Petersham sells for fifty cents and is carried in the denominational book-stores. If a crèche is not practical, a little altar-table may be arranged with a beautifully colored Christmas picture surrounded by evergreens, and a tall lighted candle at either side. A favorite picture for this purpose is "Everybody's Brother," by Margaret Tarrant.²

3. Conversation about the true meaning of Christmas.

4. Singing favorite carols and songs and listening to Christmas music on a victrola or piano.

5. Finding the Christmas stories in the Bible and hearing them read aloud by a leader or an older child who can read well. If care is taken to explain any unfamiliar words like "swaddling clothes" and "decree" the children will be touched by the beauty, wonder, and mystery of the biblical language.

6. Enjoying some of the most famous pictures illustrating the different Christmas stories. Many of these are available in the Graded Picture Sets, in current magazines, and on religious calendars. It may be possible to arrange for lantern slides of a few of the well-loved pictures. As the children look at the picture, a leader may tell its story, and then the group may sing an appropriate song.

7. Making their own Christmas song-poem. The way one primary group carried out this activity is described in an article in the December, 1934 *Children's Leader*.³ The song was printed in the primary worship suggestions in the November, 1936, *International Journal*.

8. Carrying out plans for sharing Christmas happiness: trimming a tree for the nursery or beginner department, or making Christmas cut-outs or tree ornaments for them; making Christmas cards for parents or shut-in friends; making a book of Christmas pictures and stories for the children's ward in a hospital or for a children's home; making gifts; bringing toys or clothing for a White Gift service; singing songs and telling Christmas stories to a shut-in child.

9. Going to the church auditorium to enjoy the beauty of the Christmas decorations and listen to Christmas music played on the organ.

¹ Color prints may be secured in various sizes from Hale, Cushman and Flint, 116 Newbury Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

² Mary Grace Martin, "Creating a Christmas Song," *The American Baptist Publication Society*, Philadelphia.

10. Taking part in the worship of the church school on Christmas Day. This may be a pageant in which the primary children have a part. They will be able to appreciate this activity more if time has been spent becoming familiar with the Christmas stories and songs to be used in the pageant.

11. Dramatizing the Christmas story or other Christmas stories about children who have shared Christmas happiness.

12. Reading the Christmas stories in books written especially for primary children. There are several fine ones that are not expensive and should find a place on the browsing table of every primary department during this Christmas season. See the list in "Materials that will Enrich Worship."

13. Bringing a birthday offering as a way of remembering Jesus' birthday, and planning a way of spending the money in keeping with the spirit of the day.

Materials That Will Enrich Worship

No matter how meagre may seem the resources of a primary department, every leader should try to use only the best worship materials, pictures, music and stories, that the children may come to appreciate the real religious beauty of this happy Christmastime.

CHRISTMAS SONGS:

- "Away in a Manger"⁴, 4, 5, 7, 8
- "Silent Night"⁵, 4, 5, 7, 8
- "Baby Jesus, Fast Asleep"⁶, 6
- "Carol, Children, Carol"⁷, 5, 8
- "Bethlehem Lullaby"⁸
- "Little Christmas Baby"⁴
- "Baby Jesus"⁹
- "Love Gifts"¹⁰
- "Christmas Night"⁴
- "Every Christmas Night"⁴
- "The Friendly Beasts"⁶
- "The Christmas Star"⁸
- "The Blessed Baby Jesus"⁸

BIBLE VERSES ABOUT LOVING-GIVING:

- "Opening their treasures, they offered unto him gifts."—Matthew 2:11
- "It is more blessed to give than to receive."—Acts 20:35
- "A friend loveth at all times."—Proverbs 17:17
- "We love because he first loved us."—I John 4:19
- "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."—I John 4:11

⁴ Elizabeth McE. Shields, *Worship and Conduct Songs for Beginners and Primaries*. Richmond, Va., Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1929.

⁵ *Primary Music and Worship*. Philadelphia, Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1930.

⁶ Clara Beers Blashfield, *Song Friends for Younger Children*. Rock Island, Ill., The Vaile Co., 1931.

⁷ Danielson and Conant, *Song and Play for Children*. Boston, The Pilgrim Press, 1925.

⁸ Edith Lovell Thomas, *A First Book in Hymns and Worship*. New York, The Abingdon Press, 1922.

⁹ Danielson and Conant, *Songs for Little People*. Boston, The Pilgrim Press, 1915.

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"God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son."—John 3:16a
 "Let us love one another."—I John 4:7
 "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—Matthew 22:39b
 "Every Man shall give as he is able."—Deuteronomy 16:17
 "God loveth a cheerful giver."—II Corinthians 9:17
 "What I have, that give I thee."—Acts 3:6b

CHRISTMAS PICTURES:

"The Annunciation," Hacker
 "Holy Night," Correggio
 "Arrival of the Shepherds," Lerolle
 "The Worship of the Wise-Men," Hofmann
 Some of the famous Madonnas such as those by Raphael, Ferruzzi, Murillo, and Dagnan-Bouveret.
 "The Star of Bethlehem" and "Everybody's Brother," Tarrant
 Pictures of children sharing Christmas joy and happiness, from current magazines and story papers, and the Graded Picture Sets.

CHRISTMAS STORIES FOR THE CHILDREN TO READ:

"When Jesus Came" and "The Story of the Star"⁹
 "The First Christmas" and "The Baby King's Journey"¹⁰
 "When Jesus Was a Baby"¹¹
 "The Song the Shepherds Heard"¹²
 "The Star of the King"¹²
 "The Christ Child"¹³
 "The Baby Jesus" and "Presents for the Baby Jesus"¹⁴
 "A Child is Born"¹⁵
 "When Jesus Came," "The Story the Shepherds Told," and "The Visit of the Wise-men"¹⁶

CHRISTMAS STORIES TO TELL:

"Finding Christmas"¹⁷
 "The Golden Cobwebs"¹⁸
 "Remembering Christmas"¹⁹
 "The Jar of Rosemary"²⁰
 "A Merry Christmas"²¹
 "This is Christmas"²²
 "Why the Chimes Rang"²²
 "The Shepherd Who Didn't Go"²³

Other appropriate stories may be found in the December issues of leaders' magazines and story papers, and in the Christmas units in the Graded Courses.

⁹ From *Bible Stories to Read*, Jessie Eleanor Moore. New York, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1929. Price, 60¢.

¹⁰ From *Stories of Long Ago*, Mildred J. McArdle. New York, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1929. Price 60¢.

¹¹ From *Jesus and the Children*, Ethel L. Smith. New York, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1929. Price 60¢.

¹² Mary Entwistle. New York, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1935. Price, 25¢.

¹³ Maud and Miska Petersham. New York, Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1931. Price, \$2.00.

¹⁴ From *I Wonder*, Alberta Munkres. New York, Abingdon Press, 1930. Price, \$1.00.

¹⁵ Edna Dean Baker. Racine Wisconsin, Whitman Publishing Company, 1932. Price, 60¢.

¹⁶ From *The Story of Jesus*, Gloria Diener. Chicago, Rand, McNally and Company, 1935. Price, 10¢.

¹⁷ Mary C. Odell, *The Story Shop*. Philadelphia, Judson Press, 1938.

¹⁸ Sara Cone Bryant, *How to Tell Stories to Children*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1905.

¹⁹ Mary K. Berg, *More Primary Worship Programs*. New York, Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1928.

²⁰ Maud Lindsay, *The Story Teller*. New York, Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1915.

²¹ Jeanette E. Perkins, *Primary Worship Guide*. Boston, The Pilgrim Press, 1929.

²² Raymond M. Alden, *Why the Chimes Rang and Other Stories*. Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1924.

²³ Jay Stocking, *The City That Never Was Reached*. Boston, The Pilgrim Press, 1911.

CHRISTMAS POEMS:

A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS

Dear Father, grant that every hanging stocking
 With good things may be filled—from top to toe.
 That every little fir tree in the forest
 Into a merry Christmas tree may grow.
 I pray thee that no children may go hungry—
 Or suffer from the cold—or friendless be.
 And help me find some child of thine, dear Father,
 To share my happy Christmas Day with me!

—WINNIFRED J. MOTT²⁴

BECAUSE JESUS CAME

Because Jesus came,
 Every year on Christmas night
 Songs begin and candles glow,
 And we talk, while stars shine bright,
 Of a Christmas long ago.

And because he came
 Hearts are kinder everywhere,
 And the hungry and the cold
 And the sad have better care
 Than they had in days of old.

All the year we'll still
 Think of Christmas, we will show
 Loving-kindness in his name
 Every day, till all shall know
 That Jesus came.

—NANCY BYRD TURNER²⁵

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

There's a wreath hung up in the window,
 And Christmas is not far away,
 And we both want all little children
 To be happy on Jesus' birthday.

We've taken some toys from our boxes,
 Good things we really can spare;
 We're going to give them to others,
 For things are the best when you share.

—MYRTLE BARBER CARPENTER²⁶

THE CHRISTMAS BOX

A wreath against the window pane
 Christmas time is here again!
 Children near and far away
 All are glad on Christmas day.

Find and mend each outgrown toy,
 Let it bring somebody joy!
 The best of fun I think, don't you,
 Is making others happy, too!

—ELEANOR HAMMOND²⁷

Suggested Program for December 4

THEME: "Why Do Bells for Christmas Ring?"

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP: As the children come into their department room on this first Sunday in December, they will find many evidences of happy preparations for the Christmas season. Books of Christmas stories, poems and pictures will be on the browsing table for them to enjoy. Some of the children may be encouraged to hunt for Christmas pictures in their picture-file and hang a few of them around the room. Others may wish to draw Christmas pictures of their own, or start making gifts or tree ornaments or some other Christmas activity. A few may gather around the piano and sing some of their favorite songs, or if a Victrola is available, the group may enjoy listening to some Christmas

²⁴ From *The Mayflower*. The Pilgrim Press. Used by permission.

²⁵ From *Elementary Teacher*. Used by permission of Whitmore and Smith.

²⁶ From *Story World*. Philadelphia, The American Baptist Publication Society. Used by permission.

²⁷ From *Picture Story Paper*. Copyright, 1936. Cincinnati, The Methodist Book Concern. Used by permission.

carols. After a period of happy fellowship and activity, the group may be ready for worship.

QUIET CHRISTMAS MUSIC: "Chimes."¹⁴

CONVERSATION: The leader may guide the children to express their ideas about the meaning of Christmas and why we remember this day each year. What happy day is coming soon? Why is Christmas always such a happy time for us? Was there ever a time when there was no Christmas? What happened on the first Christmas Day that makes us want to remember it every year? How do our friends keep our birthdays? Can you think of a way to make Christmas, the birthday of Jesus, a happy one?

SONG: "Why Do Bells for Christmas Ring?"^{28, 4, 8}

STORY: "Loving—Giving"

High up in the steeple hung the Christmas bells. They had hung there many, many years. On each Christmas day they always had rung such beautiful music. One day one of the little bells cracked and could ring no more. A little new bell was hung in its place. Christmas was coming very soon. "What shall I do? I do not know how to play the Christmas music; I do not know how to ring," said the little bell.

"Never mind," said the other bells, "you will know when the time comes. Just wait and listen, and you will know."

So the little bell waited and listened. The street below was full of people, some coming this way and some going that. At night-time the street was full of lights; some were the street lights and some were in the store windows; some were in the trolley-cars and some were on the automobiles.

But the little bell liked best to watch the people passing, and to hear what they said, for he was waiting to learn what to ring on Christmas day. An old man came by. He was somebody's grandfather. His arms were full of bundles. The little bell could hear him saying, "Now I have something for little John, and for the baby, and won't they be surprised?" And he laughed.

Then came some boys and girls hurrying home from school talking and laughing together.

"Oh, I have something to give to mother and to father," said another.

The little bell could hear them each one telling of what they were going to give.

Soon came a good mother walking past with such a happy face and more packages than you could count. There was something for every one at home—father, brothers, sisters, baby. The little bell watched them all and listened and thought.

At last Christmas Day came and the Christmas bells began to ring. All the people stopped to listen to the beautiful music of their ringing. Then the little bell knew what to say, and it rang out:

"Loving—giving—
 Loving—giving."

And all the other bells sang the same story:

"Loving—giving—
 Loving—giving."

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

CHRISTMAS POEM:

CHRISTMASTIME

Little stars and candles
 Shine out at Christmastime,
 And many bells are ringing
 Their merry Christmas chime.

Because the Christmas Baby,
 Once came to dwell on earth,
 We keep the happy Christmas Day
 In memory of his birth.

—EMMA F. BUSH²⁸

SILENT PRAYER. (The pianist may play soft Christmas music during the few moments of silence.)

SONG: "Be Glad."¹⁸

JUNIOR DEPARTMENT

By Ellen M. Goldey*

THEME FOR DECEMBER: *Christian Juniors Keeping Christ in Christmas*

For the Leader

It is alarming, I feel, the rapidity with which the spelling of the word Christmas is gaining popularity. Our newspapers are filled with advertisements of Xmas gifts; our paper reminds us daily of the number of shopping days until Xmas; our shops and shop windows are filled with Xmas placards and even some of the greeting cards are worded, Merry Xmas and Xmas Greetings. To be sure this fact would not be so alarming were the majority of us Greek students, who understood the origin of this abbreviation. But most of us today are Math students to whom the letter X is an unknown quantity. If Jesus were to visit our cities during the Christmas season and see us as we rush madly about trying to catch up with Christmas shopping and Christmas preparations, forgetting to be kind to those who serve us in our shops; giving way in our homes to jangled nerves; I wonder if he too would think we had substituted something unknown in place of the Birthday of the Savior of Mankind.

In view of all this, we in our own department could not but wonder how our junior boys and girls were spelling and "thinking" Christmas. Was it to them a day when, for some unknown reason, they were showered with gifts? Or was it a time when their hearts were strangely warmed and happy, because remembering the birth of a babe in Bethlehem many years ago, they tried to share the love this babe brought with him. A discussion was planned around the spelling of Christmas, and the way our boys and girls tried to keep Christ in Christmas was the richest and happiest time I think, we have experienced together keeping Christmas.

Materials That May Enrich Worship STORIES

"Judah Finds a King" by Mildred N. Van Vranken, *The Elementary Magazine*, December, 1934.

"Christmas Everywhere" by Dorothy B. Fritz, *International Journal of Religious Education*, November 1936, page 30. Short descriptions of Christmas in Italy, Norway, Austria, Germany, Spain, France, England and United States.

Story of the carols, "O Little Town of Bethlehem" and "Silent Night, Holy Night" *International Journal of Religious Education*, November 1935, page 27. Also the origin of the carols, "Away in a Manger" "O, Come All Ye Faithful," "Hark the Herald Angels Sing."

"Christmas in Many Lands." *The Elementary Magazine*, December 1935, pages 651-653 and 666-669.

"The Crèche of St. Francis," by Jeanette E. Perkins, and an "Old French Carol, Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella" also "The Story of the First Crèche" *The Elementary Magazine*, December 1935.

The Road to Bethlehem, by Ione V. Sikes. May be obtained from the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia.

* Wilmington, Delaware.

Christmas Carols, by Hendrick W. Van Loon, Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York. (Public Library)

Christmas Everywhere. A Book of Christmas Customs of Many Lands by Elizabeth Hough Schrist, Macrae Smith Company, Philadelphia. (Public Library)

Many more source books may also be found in the public library.

SCRIPTURE:

The Christmas Story, Luke 2:8-20; Matthew 2:1-11. John 3:16, 14:15, 23. 15:11-14. 17:20-22.

CAROLS:

The Hymnal for Boys and Girls by Parker and Richards, D. Appleton-Century Co., N.Y., has a number of good carols, including "We Three Kings of Orient Are," and "Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella."

The group will want to sing their favorite carols, which can be found in practically all church school hymnals.

Suggested Program for December 4

THEME: *The Meaning of Christmas*

SETTING FOR WORSHIP:

If it is possible, secure holly or Christmas greens and let the boys and girls arrange these to use this month. We keep ours for a long time by placing them in water and putting them in a cool place during the week.

On the browsing table place several of the books suggested and add more each Sunday. Around the room hang several Christmas pictures. Our group particularly enjoys the Madonna pictures at this time of year. Last Christmas we found a beautiful copy of "The Christ Child," by Murillo, on a Christmas card. We purchased a frame at Woolworths and used our framed picture on the piano in front of a vase of holly.

Our pianist is on hand early and the early comers find her at the piano playing softly some familiar carols. Soon a group gathers around her and join in singing their favorites. After several of these have been sung, the group tries some new ones we would like to learn.

On a table in the front of the room were placed a manger and several figures for making a crèche. These were soon discovered by some of the boys and girls and after asking permission to make the crèche, they went eagerly to work. The stable was soon in place and the figures representing Joseph and Mary and the baby were soon arranged. Someone recalled that it was the custom in those days to wrap all new born babies in strips of clean white linen called swaddling clothes. Another thought he would like to see the shepherds coming from the hillside. Several went in search of the janitor to secure newspapers to make the hill. A girl remembered some green crepe paper which had been used before and she brought this to make the pasture for the sheep. The group felt there weren't enough sheep and shepherds and it did seem too bad to have just two wise men. It was soon discovered however, that several of the group had at home the necessary figures to make the crèche complete and thought they would like to bring them the following week. One boy asked, "Instead of having our usual two candles this month, couldn't we fix one in back of the stable to represent the star? Then we could have the wise men coming from the other side and following the star." After several trials the candle was put in place so that it came to a good height above the stable. How naturally the group responded, as the candle was lighted, to the

CALL TO WORSHIP:

"We have seen his star in the east.
And are come to worship him."

—ST. MATTHEW 2:2b

CAROL: "Angels, We Have Heard"

THE NATIVITY SCENE: Have someone who has been working on the crèche, explain it to the group.

DISCUSSION

Leader: Have you all seen the familiar Christmas greeting which is written on our black board? Let us all read it together. "Merry Christmas!" Have I spelled the word Christmas correctly? ("You have spelled it right, but we often see it spelled Xmas," was the answer. Merry Xmas was written underneath the other greeting.) Can anyone tell me why we write Christmas, Xmas sometimes? What does the letter X stand for, I wonder? (Many faces lightened up at once and Betty, a sixth grade girl said, "My brother studies algebra and he says that X is the unknown quantity. I think it is the answer he doesn't know but is supposed to find.")

Yes, in algebra the letter X does stand for that, but I wonder if that is what it means here. What does the word Christmas mean? ("It's Jesus' birthday" was the ready answer.) Taking the word apart, it means the Mass of Christ and Mass is a celebration, so we might say Christmas is the celebration of the coming of Christ into the world. The letter X, when used as an abbreviation for Christ, really comes from Greek and represents the first letter of the Greek word for Christ. XP, the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ, were used more in early times, but in modern times X has been used as an abbreviation of the syllable Christ. So few people really know this, that some of us are sorry that so many advertisers are spelling Christmas, Xmas, for we think people are apt to forget that it is the celebration of Christ's birthday.

PLANNING ACTIVITIES:

Leader: If Christmas is the mass or celebration of Christ, how do you think we should celebrate Christmas in the junior department this year?

Many suggestions were made. "We could send a Christmas basket to 'our family' and include clothing and toys for the two boys and the baby. We know how old they are and we could bring something they would like." "We could make Christmas cards or booklets for our mothers and fathers." One of the group asked, "May we go carolling again this year on the Sunday evening before Christmas and then come back to the Church House like we did last year and have cocoa and sandwiches and then all go into the church service together? I can bring some sandwiches, I'm sure." This met with the hearty approval of all and plans were made to carry out this suggestion.

Each year a list of "shut ins" is secured from the church office to whom the juniors are happy to sing carols. We secure cars to take the group around and go back, as has been stated above, for a light supper and a candy cane before going into the church service.

"The new boys and girls in our department do not know that for the past two years you older members have felt that you would rather do without your boxes of candy from the Church school so you could have the money to help another group have a happy Christmas. Last year you purchased a movie film for the boys and girls in our state who have been exposed to tuberculosis and who are in the country at Sunnybrook Cottage trying to regain their health."

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I think we had better vote again this year to see if this is what you would like to do."

The group decided to continue this practice and a committee was appointed to report to the group a list of the things the boys and girls at Sunnysbrook would like to have.

One of the girls made the following suggestion: "Our crèche represents the very first Christmas there was and I think it would be nice if we could make something to show how we celebrate Christmas today. I have a doll house which looks like our own homes and I could bring it and we could fix it to represent Christmas in our homes today." "We could get a small Christmas tree and decorate it with electric bulbs and use it as an outdoor Christmas tree for the house," was another suggestion. "And we could get cotton and artificial snow and make a white Christmas, the kind we all like." Many of the group offered to bring small trees and figures on sleds and skis to put in the yard and a committee was appointed to purchase the cotton and snow and another group to go with the leader to select the Christmas tree.

PRAYER:

Leader: These suggestions of the way you would like to celebrate Christmas show, I think, that you want to keep Christ in Christmas. We show love for Jesus in remembering to do the kinds of things Jesus spent his life doing. Jesus taught us that we are all children of a kind heavenly Father who loves us and who wants us to love him and love one another. We show that we love God by being kind to one another and by trying to make one another happy. This is one of the best ways of keeping Christmas. Shall we ask God to help us in our plans to keep Christmas this year?

Prayer

CAROL: "As with Gladness Men of Old"

December 11

THEME: Remembering the Golden Rule
ENTERPRISES:

Sunday morning found a busy group in the junior room. Two tables had been placed together a short distance from the crèche. The doll house, looking very much like a modern home, was put in place and many busy hands began spreading the "snow." The Christmas tree committee, with the help of the janitor, made the tree secure in a large flower bowl. This was done by placing coal around the tree trunk and then filling the bowl with water. The Christmas tree lights were tested and the lights arranged on the tree. Those who had brought figures for the crèche were busy completing that. One of the teachers had brought a gold star and the group fixed this above the stable so that the flame from the candle reflected on it. Another group was at the piano singing carols while still others were busy making Christmas cards.

One of our mothers had sent us enough copies of the "Madonna of the Chair" for each child to have one. The story of how this picture was painted was told to the group. After a busy, happy time the group came together to hear the reports of the Sunnysbrook committee and to make any further plans.

This committee reported that the boys and girls at the cottage had loved the movie and that they would be very happy to have another one if the group cared to send it. Or if the group wanted to send something different this year, the superintendent thought that a wagon or sled might be nice. One of the girls said she had a sled she would like to send and Ben had a scooter he used occasionally and he thought the boys would enjoy it more than he would. So the group asked the committee to purchase a movie film, preferably an "Our Gang Comedy" and it so happened there was money enough to buy also a small sturdy wagon.

Then one of our fifth grade girls said, "I

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have been wondering if we could have a party for the children in 'our family.' We could play games and have something nice to eat and then we could give the children the presents we have for them before they go home." The idea of a party was contagious and the suggestions for it were many.

Leader: I wonder if John and Dick would enjoy coming here to a party. I think we will have to do some pretty hard thinking here. The mother of these boys is dead and their father is in the hospital. Their sister and her husband have worked hard to take care of John and Dick, but because the Family Society knows they need help, they have asked us to do what we can for them. John and Dick do not know any of us and I wonder if they would really enjoy coming to a party under these circumstances. Do you think they would be embarrassed receiving the things we will have for them if there are forty boys and girls watching them? I wonder if we would know how to play with them so they wouldn't think we were feeling sorry for them? If you were John or Dick, do you think you would like to come here for a party and receive some presents? (After a few moments of quiet the girl who had suggested the party said, "I hadn't thought of how they might feel, I guess if I were one of those boys I would rather have the presents brought to my home.")

(In the light of the Golden Rule the group decided that if they were the two boys they would rather have the presents brought to them instead of coming to a party for them. The leader said that the Boy Scouts of the church had sent word they would be glad to deliver Christmas baskets and the group gladly accepted their offer to deliver theirs. The leader also reported that the Beginner's Department were filling stockings and that they would be glad to fill stockings for the children in our family if they could be told the correct sizes needed. The Intermediate Department sent word they had two junior aged girls in their family and they would be glad to receive any toys or clothing our girls might have to share.)

Leader: There is still another matter for us

to decide today. It has been our custom for several years to make a birthday offering once a year instead of on the Sunday nearest our birthdays. Because Christmas is Jesus' birthday we have been bringing our birthday offering on our Christmas Sundays. Do you feel you would like to continue doing this? (It was decided that during the next two Sundays the group would bring a birthday offering and that they would decide later what they would like to do with it.)

CAROLS:

The remainder of the time was spent singing the carols the group selected to sing when they went carolling. Instead of carrying hymnals with them, the group learned well the first stanzas of three or four of their favorite carols and these they sang as they gathered under the windows of their shut-in friends.

December 18

THEME: *Keeping Christ in Christmas Through Christmas Giving.*

PREPARING THE GIFTS:

The first arrivals in the junior department found the leader and several of the teachers hanging what looked like small Christmas balls on the Christmas tree. "Where did you get those? May I help you put them on the tree?" Were the questions asked by many. The leader replied, "We are experimenting. You see we were wondering just how we would present our birthday offering this year, so we have each wrapped our offering in a little ball of cotton and then tied it in colored cellophane and we are just now hanging them on our Christmas tree to see how they would look there. Do you like the effect?" "I like it, it makes the tree much prettier. May I make a ball with my offering and hang it on the tree?" "I like it too, will you show me how to make the ball so I can hang mine on the tree?" There were plenty of cotton and different colored pieces of cellophane on hand and soon the money offerings were wrapped and hung on the tree.

One of the girls found the leader and said, "I have brought some small figures to make a crèche in our home, for I am sure those of us who are trying to keep Christ in Christmas this year will want to make a crèche in our own homes." This paved the way for others in the group to tell of the crèches they had arranged in their own homes while others told how in their homes they had enjoyed singing Christmas carols. One girl reported that her family had learned "Silent Night," in German, and were now studying "O, Come All Ye Faithful," in Latin.

Some of the girls had helped the leader arrange vases of holly and pine on the class tables. On each table were also placed red candles. The group had decided they would like to bring their gifts for the cottage children forward, and then form a friendship circle around the room, keeping the crèche, their home and tree and gifts within the circle.

OPENING HYMN: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

CALL TO WORSHIP: We have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him.

LIGHTING OF CANDLES: (This included the candles on the tables as well as the one representing the star over the manger. Members of the group were at their places ready to light the candles.)

CAROL: "Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella"

THE CHRISTMAS STORY: Read by leader from the Bible, Luke 2:8-17 and Matthew 2:1-8.

CAROL: "As With Gladness Men of Old" POEM: "What Makes Christmas"¹ by Annie Johnson Flint.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS: This is done quietly and slowly and worshipfully as pianist continues playing.

TALK:

Short talk by leader, who said that the splendid spirit in which the group had carried out their Christmas plans showed they had caught the real meaning of Christmas.

PRAYER: By Leader.

CLOSING HYMN: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

December 25

THEME: *Christmas*

The time today will be taken up mostly with singing the favorite carols of the group. The Christmas story will be read by the entire group. The boys and girls will want to talk over their

Christmas experiences, their carolling, and may want to decide what to do with their birthday offering. It would be well for the leader to tell the story, "Judah Finds a King" and help the group to understand that as they continue to live and work joyously together, helping and loving others so will they continue to keep Christmas throughout the year. The poem "Love's Offering" by Phillip Gregory is a good one to use.

LOVE'S OFFERING²

What shall I bring thee, O Little Stranger,
Cradled with straw in a Judean manger?
No gold nor myrrh, nor incense rare
Have I, dear Babe, with thee to share;
But thou dost treasure the gift I bring,
My heart, love's dearest offering.

—PHILLIP GREGORY

WHAT MAKES CHRISTMAS²

It was not the angels' singing
Gave the Christmas thought.
Not the precious gold and incense
By the Wise Men brought;

Not the shining star that led them
On their unknown way;
'Twas the Christ within the manger
Made the Christmas Day.

So 'tis not the tree and presents
Make our Christmas Day,
'Tis not what we get that counts,
But—what we give away.

'Tis the joy of loving service
Makes the glad hours bright,
Thinking first of others' pleasure,
Self put out of sight.

We need never mourn that Christmas
Comes but once a year.
Since the blessedness of giving
Brings the Christmas cheer.

If we keep the Christmas spirit
In our hearts alway,
Through the whole year we can make it
Christmas every day.

—ANNIE JOHNSON FLINT

² From *Christmas*, Volume Seven, published by Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis. These poems selected by James Gilchrist Lawson, published by permission.

¹ See program for December 25.

INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT

By Lillian White*

THEME FOR DECEMBER: *Good Will Toward Men*

MUSIC:

Make the most of music during this month. Tap the resources of your church and community. If someone plays the violin or flute, for example, ask him to play a Christmas number of the offertory. If members of your department are in a school glee club, ask them to sing in church school the Christmas numbers they are learning. Ask a girl or boy with a nice voice to learn to sing as a solo an unfamiliar carol you would like to introduce to your department, for example "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" (a lovely thing). *The Hymnal for Boys and Girls*, D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc. has an excellent collection of Christ-

mas hymns and carols. Find out what carols members of your department are learning at school and use these in church school. Music suggested in the following services is tentative, assuming your use of your own local resources.

DECORATIONS:

Let your room speak of the Christmas message. Use the religious symbols of Christmas: stars, candles, mangers, madonnas, wise men, shepherds. Avoid crepe paper. Greens are always lovely—English ivy, evergreen, holly, etc. Use red in very small quantities, as it is more effective that way. A few of the members of your department who like to paint might make a large Christmas wall painting for your room. For paper, get a project roll from a school supply house and inexpensive powder paints to be mixed in water. Encourage the pupils to make the drawing original rather than copied. The

first Sunday, hang on your altar curtain as lovely a picture as you can get of the birthday of Jesus, colored if possible. Beginning with the second Sunday, use a manger scene on your altar as a center of interest. Some of the boys could work out a special background and lighting effect for this. Since the services are to stress the thought of good will, cut letters out of gold cardboard and pin high on the dark curtain above your altar the words, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN.

Explain before beginning the first service how the Scripture is to be read. Teach the offertory response, if the group does not know it already. This is to be used all through December.

December 4

THEME: *The Beauty of the Christmas Story*

PRELUDE: "Love Came Down at Christ-

* Teacher, Intermediate Department, Riverside Church, New York City.

mas" No. 94, *The Methodist Hymnal*; "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

CANDLE-LIGHTING: Use hymn "Dear God, 'Twas Thou Didst Light the Stars," No. 160, *The Hymnal for Boys and Girls* (Solo by candle-lighter, standing by the candles)

CHRISTMAS HYMNS YOUR GROUP LOVES:¹ They may be "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "O Come, All Ye Faithful."

WORSHIP THOUGHTS: (By leader) The Beauty of the Christmas Story

What could be more beautiful and appealing than the Christmas story! A tiny baby born of a simple peasant woman and cradled in a manger in the sweet smelling hay, with the gentle animals standing around and a kindly father watching by; a star shining on shepherds who love God; a brilliant light and angel voices singing; three stately learned men following a star and bowing humbly before the tiny baby!

The stories are both beautiful and satisfying. It seems quite in keeping with the rest of his life that there was no room in the inn for the baby Jesus. The world later had no place for him. It is quite right he should have been born of working people. His gospel is the gospel of the value of all people for their souls, not their money. It seems quite right that the wisest living men should have bowed to him, for his brilliance and wisdom stand above anyone else's we have ever heard of. It seems right that on the birth night of this great soul of all ages, angels should sing for joy. And quite right that shepherds who lay outdoors, gazing at the brilliant stars hanging low over their heads, should be the ones to hear the angels. The whole story suits us perfectly. Shall we read some of it again?

CHORAL READING: Luke 2: 8-20.² (Read the narrative parts in unison, letting the direct quotations be taken by people asked in advance. A boy could read the first angel's part, a class of girls the words of the multitude of angels and a class of boys the shepherds.)

INTRODUCTION TO CAROLS:

Christians have treasured this poetic story down the ages, singing of it in exquisite carols. They have added in their songs new touches to the story, new names. They speak, for example of "The rose of Jesse's stem," comparing the baby Jesus to a rose, and referring to his descent from the ancient family of Jesse. Let us listen to some of these carols.

CAROLS: (Sung as solos or by a special choir. Have each one read clearly and slowly before it is sung so that all can enjoy the words.)

"Lo, How a Rose," *Keep On Singing*, Paull-Pioneer Music Corporation, New York City, 25¢

"Carol of the Flowers," *Christmas Carols and Hymns for School and Choir*, H. Denn, American Book Co.
"A Christmas Folk Song," *Singing Worship*, E. L. Thomas, Abingdon Press.

PRAYER

HYMN: "There's a Song in the Air"

OFFERING:

Offering Sentences:

This is the month of giving;

¹ All hymns are taken from *The New Hymnal for American Youth*, D. Appleton-Century Co., unless otherwise indicated. They are also found in many other hymnals.

² Printed also as No. 380, Responsive Readings, in the *New Hymnal for American Youth*.

When we think of Jesus' birth, we think of giving.

We rejoice that we can bring these gifts of money to our church, The church that was founded by the followers of the great teacher Who was once the baby in the manger.

Teach us to give generously and wisely.

Music: "All My Heart this Night Rejoices"; or "Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella"³

Response: (Chorus of "Hearken, All! What Holy Singing," No. 108 *Methodist Hymnal*)

HYMN: "The First Noel the Angel Did Say"

BENEDICTION: May we leave this place with something of the beauty of the Christmas story in our hearts. May we live in the light of this beauty the whole month through. Amen.

December 11

(Give copies of the manger prayer to the pupils as they enter the room.)

THEME: *Good Will Toward Men*

PRELUDE: "Away in a Manger"; "Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella"

MANGER CEREMONY:

Introduction: As we have our manger scene on the altar, shall we have a manger ceremony? Let us begin by singing the old hymn written by Martin Luther, "Away in a Manger."

Hymn: "Away in a Manger"

Introduction to Hymn: St. Francis is said to be the person who started the custom of having manger scenes in churches at Christmas time. The song, "Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella" is the story of people in a village in France running to see the manger scene. Shall we sing it?

Hymn: "Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella."³

Prayer: (Words to Bach's "Christmas Carol" by Paulus Gerhardt)

I stand beside thy cradle here,
Who fillest all my being,
And give to thee, with heart sincere,
The life that thou art freeing.
O little, Jesu take my heart,
My mind, my will, my ev'ry part,
And let it please thee ever.

HYMN: "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE READING: The beautiful story of the angels singing on the night Jesus was born is another way of saying that the birth of Jesus was of great importance to the world. Jesus was so great, says the story, that angels announced his birth. What did they say? We would expect them to say something descriptive of Jesus' life, his theme song.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 2:13, 14 (Have this read from the King James' version and the American Standard, by two pupils announcing each.)

HYMN: "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"

INTRODUCTION TO PICTURE-STORY: According to the angels' message, the key-

note of Jesus' life was good will. Good will means a friendly attitude, wishing and willing good, loving others, wanting them to have what is good. With the help of pictures, let us see how good will was truly the keynote of Jesus' life and words.

PICTURE STORY: Jesus, the Prophet of Good Will.⁴ (Have soft music when the pictures are on the screen.)

When Jesus began his career as a teacher, he announced that his mission was to bring good will to those in greatest need. Here he is preaching at the synagogue at Nazareth.

Picture: "Jesus Preaching in the Synagogue at Nazareth," by Tissot, IK0417

He chose a verse from the teaching of his great predecessor, Isaiah, to describe his aims as teacher.

Scripture Reading: Luke 4:18, 19

He began at once living out his mission.

Scripture Reading: Luke 5:15; Matthew 4:23

He made friends with sinners and outcasts, put hope in the hearts of those who had lost all hope. Courage, new life, and joy followed him wherever he went. He would good to every kind of person.

Pictures: "Jesus Healing the Sick," by Dietrich, MT0424; "Come Unto Me," by Bloch, MT1128; "Christ Calling Young People," by Burnand, MT1129.1

Not only did Jesus express good will in his own life, but he spoke of a God whose attitude was good will. Not a God who sends sickness and insanity because a person has sinned, but a God who wants everyone to be well and happy, a God who forgives our sins and does not punish. Listen to some of his words.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:25, 26; 10:29-31

Jesus told a story to show what God is like. A son had sinned but the Father welcomes him back.

Pictures: "Father's Forgiveness," Tissot, IK1520; "Prodigal and Father," Gebhardt, IK1520.2

Scripture Reading: Luke 15:21-24

So God rejoices when we see that we have done wrong. He does not punish.

The burden of Jesus' teaching to his people was that they should love every one.

Pictures: "Sermon on the Mount," Artist unknown, MT0502.3; "Sermon on the Mount," Tissot, MT0501.2

Scripture Reading: Luke 10:27; Matthew 7:12

You must love even your enemies.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:43-48

He told the story of the Good Samaritan to show that we should have good will toward people whether of our race or not, and help them.

Pictures: "And Who Is My Neighbor?" by Sullivan, IK1029; "Bringing Him to the Inn," by Burnand, IK1034

Scripture Reading: Luke 10:33-37

Jesus' own life to the very end was true to the gospel of good will. He would not use the sword to defend himself.

Pictures: "Judas Betraying," by Tissot, MK1445; "Christ before Pilate," by Munkacsy, IK2302

Scripture Reading: Matthew 26:47-52

When he hung on the cross, he prayed forgiveness for those who caused his death.

Pictures: "The Crucifixion," by Munkacsy, MT2750

Scripture Reading: Luke 23:33, 34

Was not the angels' song a true description of Jesus' life?

Pictures: "Annunciation to Shepherds," by

⁴ The stereopticon pictures whose names and numbers are given here, may be obtained from the Bureau of Visual Aids of the Board of Christian Education, Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1505 Race St., Philadelphia, Pa. Rental for plain slides, 10¢, and for colored, 15¢. Other denominational houses also carry slides, as do many public libraries.

Bassano, IKo210; "Angels and Shepherds," by Hole, IKo203.3. (During the showing of these pictures, let the choir or everyone sing the response printed on this page.)

Picture: "Nativity," by Mueller, IKo216.2. (During the showing of this, have first and third stanzas of "O Holy Night" sung.)

OFFERING: (Same as for December 4. Music, "Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones.")⁵

HYMN: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" BENEDICTION

December 18

THEME: *Good Will Toward All*

PRELUDE: "Silent Night, Holy Night"

CANDLE-LIGHTING

PRAYER: (In unison or by one)

Ah, dearest Jesus, Holy Child
Make thee a bed; soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, and there recline,
And keep that chamber ever thine.

HYMN: "Joy to the World! the Lord is Come"

WORSHIP THOUGHTS: (By leader)

Last week we saw the story of Jesus' life. We saw that the angels' message of good will perfectly describes Jesus' life. Let us get clearly in our own mind just what good will as taught by Jesus involves. (Use here if possible a statement worked out by the worship committee or a class, expressing their ideas of what good will means. If this is not possible, use the following:)

Good will means not just responding to people in a friendly way,—

It means starting the friendliness.

It means not just being friendly to *certain* people,—

It means being friendly to *all* kinds of people—good and bad, rich and poor, black and white.

Good will means more than being friendly when people return the friendliness,—

It means keeping on being friendly to those who do not meet us halfway.

It means wanting for others what you want for yourself,

And working for it too.

It means meeting ill-treatment with love.

Good will means taking all hatred, indifference, and sense of superiority out of your heart.

It means caring for people and going out to them with sympathy and helpfulness.

How could we put more good will into our lives? Would it not be fun to make up an imaginary moving picture of ourselves? Each one can take his own shots in his imagination, while our pianist gives us appropriate music.

IMAGINARY MOVING PICTURE: Showing and Feeling Good Will to All. (Scenario by leader, accompanied by music suggestive of the story if possible. Speak slowly.)

Our first shot is early tomorrow morning. Perhaps you are still in bed. Mother calls. Do you show your good will toward her? The camera

follows you down stairs to breakfast. Take a few shots showing whether you are expressing good will to each member of the family, to your maid, if your family has one.

Soon you are on your way to school with your pals. Does your heart feel kindly to all the world? Are there any shots that show an absence of good will? Do you speak with unkindness to anyone you see on the street? There goes that boy or girl who's so queer. What expression would a close-up of your face disclose? There goes the person of a different race. Would the sound recorder catch any words of derision or unpleasant names? How many cheery morning greetings would it catch?

Now you are at school. Is your feeling one of good will toward your teachers? What action could the camera take that would show that you made your good will felt by your teachers?

And so on through the day. What does the camera see after school? Do you go shopping? Does the sound recorder catch a kind word to the tired sales clerk? Does the camera catch a smile for the person in the ten-cent store who bumped you in the crowd?

Take some more shots in the evening when you are at home with your family. What do these tell? (Piano plays "Now the Day is Over.") The day is done. You are in bed again. The film is finished. What does it tell you of yourself?

If we were to try especially hard this week to live a life of good will toward all, there would be several new shots our picture did not have. There would be one of you in your room before you went down to breakfast, perhaps still in bed. (Piano playing "I Would Be True.") Your face would be very thoughtful, for you would be asking God to help you keep good will in your heart all day long. You would be thinking, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Another shot might be as you were washing your face and hands for dinner and smoothing your hair. You would be thinking, "Oh I wasn't as nice as I meant to be. I'm sorry. I shall try all evening to think only kind things." And then before you went to sleep, ("Now the Day is Over") there would be another quiet moment. You would be thinking, "I made many mistakes today, but I believe I am learning. Take all unkindness from my heart before I close my eyes in slumber." (Let piano continue a few moments after the talking for meditation.)

PRAYER-HYMN Last stanza of "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

HYMN: "Love Came Down at Christmas"—*Hymnal for Boys and Girls* or *Methodist Hymnal*, first and third stanzas. (Very appropriate. If you cannot make the words available to all, use as solo or reading.)

OFFERING: (Same as for December 4. Music, "As I Sat on a Sunny Bank," *The Hymnal for Boys and Girls*, and "Good Christian Men Rejoice," *The Methodist Hymnal*)

HYMN: "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" BENEDICTION: May love and good will go in our hearts as we depart from here.

December 25

(As this Sunday falls on the very Christmas day, it gives us an opportunity to use those songs which refer to Christmas as "today")

THEME: *Good Will Between Nations*
PRELUDE: "O Come All Ye Faithful"
CALL TO WORSHIP:

And all the souls on earth shall sing,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;
And all the souls on earth shall sing,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

CAROL: (Give typed or mimeographed copies of those not in your hymnal)

"As I Sat on a Sunny Bank," *The Hymnal for Boys and Girls*; "Good Christian Men, Rejoice" *Methodist Hymnal*; "Angels, from the Realms of Glory."

SOFT MUSIC: "Silent Night, Holy Night"

CANDLE-LIGHTING: (Music. Have more candles than usual, because it is Christmas, tall white or red ones)

SCRIPTURE VERSE: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord."

RESPONSE: Chorus of "Angels from the Realms of Glory" (Explain the use of this before the service)

WORSHIP THOUGHTS: (By leader)

Our joy must be mixed with sadness today when we remember that almost two thousand years since Jesus lived and died, there is still war in the world, that there are nations fighting today, that men are killing each other. Shall we pause in a moment of silent sorrow because of this great sin and tragedy?

MOMENT OF SILENCE (No music)

POEM:

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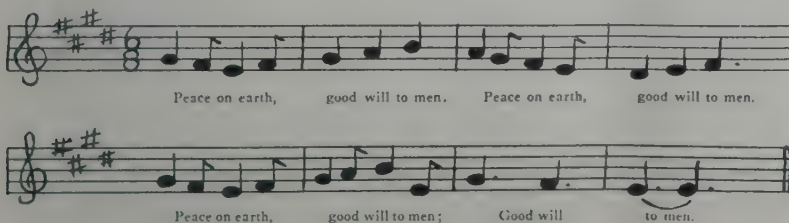
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CHRISTMAS BELLS⁶

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime,
Of peace on earth, good will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said
"For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead; nor doth he sleep;
The wrong shall fail,
The right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men!"

—HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

WORSHIP THOUGHT: (Continued)

Two thousand years ago Jesus told his own nation, the Jews, that the only way to get along with their enemy nation, the Romans was through good will. "Love your enemies," he said. The world has not yet caught up to Jesus. There must be the very same good will between nations as between individual people. One nation must really care about the others and try to help them. One nation will have to go more than half way. One nation must be friendly when others are unfriendly. And if the nations do not follow this law, they will bring great suffering upon themselves. Christians believe that in the long run, good will must win out, for love is the law of life. The carol we love to sing will come true.

HYMN: "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

OFFERING: (Same as December 4. Solo, "O Holy Night")

STORY:

THE PORTRAIT⁶

Every room in the house was full of bustling preparation. For today their son was to leave home

⁶ Used by permission of and arrangement with the Houghton-Mifflin Co.

⁶ *Manual for Training in Worship*, Hugh Hartshorne, Scribner's 1915. Used by permission.

to make his own way in the world. His name was Theodore, which means "Gift of God." His parents had given him this name when he was a little baby because they were so happy to have him. And now the time of parting had come. Before the farewells were spoken, his father took him aside and, drawing a thin package from his pocket, said: "Theodore, you have a brother whom you have never seen. His happiness and yours depends upon your finding each other. Here is an ancient family portrait that shows the features that are characteristic of our line. By this you shall know which of all the men you meet is your brother. Do not look at it now; put it into your pocket. But as you move among men study it frequently."

That night Theodore, alone and away from home, opened the little package in order to have a look at the family portrait that he had never seen. "Ha!" said he. "This is not a portrait, this is only a mirror! The face that I see is my own. This is strange. But I can use this mirror to comb my hair by and to adjust my neckties."

So it was day after day. In the ancient portrait Theodore saw only his own face, and he nearly forgot that he had a brother whose happiness as well as his depended upon their finding each other.

But what Theodore took to be only a mirror was destined to bring him strange experiences. First he began to notice that whenever he had particularly enjoyed the companionship of a friend, the supposed mirror gave back, momentarily, the friend's features as well as Theodore's own. The oddest thing about it was that the one face had in it the look of two men at the same time, his own look and his friend's look.

One day, when Theodore was canoeing upon the river, his canoe capsized and he was in danger of drowning. A gentleman upon the shore, an entire stranger, leaped into the water and saved his life. In the excitement and confusion, before one could collect oneself sufficiently to frame thankful words, the gentleman slipped away and disappeared. No one knew his name, or whence he had come, or whether he had gone. That evening, when Theodore looked into the family portrait, "Ha!" said he. "Here is the portrait of my rescuer! His features and mine are both here in a single face! Surely he must be my brother. But he is gone; we have not found each other."

Theodore's occupation took him, on another day, to the most neglected quarter of the town. A bleak November wind claimed possession of the street. Bareheaded women in thin shawls hurried past him. Half-clad, half-fed children played feebly upon the pavement. A drunken man staggered among the children and struck one of them—his own daughter. In one of the tenements Theodore saw a haggard woman dying inch by inch of tuberculosis. He had been delicately reared; such sights he had never seen; he drew back from them. But he could not escape them, for somehow they got into the family portrait. Theodore still saw his own face there, but in his very own features he beheld the pinch of hunger, the misery of sickness, the despair of sin. "Why!" he exclaimed, "all the wretched creatures I have seen this day are there in my own face!"

Then something still more startling happened. A quarrel arose. At first there was only a misunderstanding. But the misunderstanding led to scornful words; scornful words led to threats; and

threats ended in blows. Blinded by his anger, Theodore struck with all his might, and his adversary fell, bruised and bleeding. That evening, proud of his victory, Theodore looked at the family portrait, and lo! the wound that he had inflicted upon his adversary was in his own face. Then came war. He enlisted, went to the front, and fought valiantly in the trenches. Here the ancient portrait, which he carried with him wherever he went, became a sort of companion to him. For now he could see the features of his whole regiment in the one countenance that he called his own. Day after day he said, "Every man in the regiment is my brother." Thus the portrait comforted him in his privations; and it helped him to fight.

But one day, even as he was examining the ancient portrait, a change began to come over it. A look appeared that he had never seen there before. It was as if a thousand repulsive, malicious faces flitted through it all in an instant. "What can this mean?" he was starting to say, when suddenly the order came to advance upon the enemy. Once more the battle roared; once more Theodore was fighting shoulder to shoulder with the men of his regiment—every one of them his brother. Round him men were bleeding and dying—every one of them his brother. And there in front was the enemy, the enemy! One consuming passion took possession of him—to kill, to kill, to kill! The fighting came to close quarters; fring gave way to bayonet charges, and Theodore found himself in man-to-man conflict with one of the hated enemy. In an instant each had wounded the other, and each fell, bleeding but not dying. There the two foemen lay, side by side, through a long night of agony.

As day was dawning church-bells in a distant village began to chime. Theodore listened. "They are ringing a Christmas carol," said he:

"To God on high all glory be

For peace shall be on earth."

I used to sing that carol when I was a child. I had forgotten all about Christmas."

Back flew his thoughts to the old home—his happy childhood, the Christmas stockings, and then his father saying, "Theodore, you have a brother."

Said Theodore, "The portrait, the portrait!" He drew it from his bosom, and lo! it gave back the face of his own childhood, then the face of his mother, then his father, his friends, his unknown rescuer, his wretched neighbors, the acquaintance with whom he had quarreled, the members of his regiment, then—the foe who lay wounded by his side, then the whole army of the enemy, and at last a baby in a manger! And somehow in every one of them Theodore beheld his very own face.

Then it came to him: Christmas had made it all clear. Theodore had found his brother at last.

The bells in the distance were ringing:

"To God on high all glory be,

For peace shall be on earth."

HYMN: "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"

BENEDICTION: May we go from this service this Christmas day with only good will in our hearts toward every person, toward every nation. Amen.

SENIOR AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENTS

By Nancy Longenecker*

To the Leader

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." I John 5:14. The phrase of the Lord's Prayer "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," is not only a petition for the joy and peace of heaven to be found here upon earth, but it implies that we shall do our part to bring it to pass. As leaders we need to meet the test of any training that will fit us for the tasks which are ours. If we

wish to become musicians we must practice; if we wish to become physicians we must study; if we wish to become a part of the Kingdom of God on earth we must be willing to grow into it through the processes of effort, meditation, and achievement. This requires the taking of God into every experience in our lives and making him a constant companion.

Joy is a part of the Kingdom and young people should early realize that the two are basically inseparable.

There are four aspects of the will of God upon earth which we are to consider this month: first, through dreams or

ideals; second, through courage; third, through peace; and fourth, through new birth. Let us prepare the services with the young people, keeping the theme for the service very clearly in mind. Too many times we lose the impression of the worship service because the theme is not clearly kept. This means choosing material that bears definitely upon the idea and attempting to arrange it in a logical and climactic form. Many services give the impression that we are not sure where we are going and consequently have not arrived. The greatest importance for the month is this: help the youth to believe

* Director of Drama, First Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, New York.

that the will of God is a possibility on earth, and whenever his will is carried out unhindered by the human will of his followers, then miracles happen. May the following books be of real worth to you:

BIBLIOGRAPHY:
Living Courageously. Kirby Page. Farrar and Rinehart. New York. \$1.00.
Victories of Peace. D. M. Gill and A. M. Pullen. Friendship Press. New York City. \$.60.
As Far As I Can See. Winifred Kirkland. Scribners.
Recovery of Ideals. Georgia Harkness. Scribners.
Dream Power of Youth. Percy Hayward. Harper and Brothers.
Living Creatively. Kirby Page. Farrar and Rinehart. New York. \$1.00.
Oxford Book of Carols. Percy Dearmer. Oxford. \$2.50.
Noels, A Collection of Christmas Carols. Marx and Anne Oberndorfer. FitzSimons. \$1.00.

THEME FOR THE MONTH: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

December 4
THEME: *Thy will be done on earth through dreams.*
MUSIC: Traumeri, by Schumann
INTERPRETER:

Surely the will of God on earth includes joy on earth, or Jesus would not have been such a great leader of youth. December is always full of expectation, of dreams, of light and song to those who love the Christmas time. This year as we enter the month thinking of the phrase from our Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," our hearts are full of anticipation. It is as if we were possessed of a dream for a full and abundant life of everyone. The will of God for us will be the realization of our ideals which have been created through our Christian teaching and environment.

The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts and what we dream now will be realized in our lives as we grow into maturity. Jesus was a dreamer who brought his dreams to pass. Today in our psychology we have learned of wishful thinking, which is very different from the dreams and ideals that come to us out of a Christian experience. We are followers of the Glean.

As we have studied the romantic period of history when knights and ladies seemed to live enchanted lives, at least one thing makes a realistic impression upon us: they were followers of a Glean. They were possessed of dreams and their faith in their ideals made them become marvelous men and women. Today as we think of the Kingdom of God being on earth, and the possibility of God's will being carried out here by us, the first thing to remember is, we must have ideals and cling to them. Ideals function today and we must capture and hold those potent forces that are found in them. According to our ideals, so power and strength and joy surround us and lie within us. Nothing is so thrilling as a group experience of youth who have a high common purpose and are willing to sacrifice to bring it to pass.

HYMN: "O Master Workman of the Race." Tune—*Materna*
POEM: "He Whom a Dream Hath Possessed."¹ Choral Speech

All:
He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of doubting,
For mist and the blowing of winds, and the mousing of words he scorns;
Not the sinuous speech of schools he hears, but a knightly shouting,
And never comes darkness down, yet he greeteth a million morns.

Light Voices:
He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of roaming;
All roads and the flowing of waves and the speediest flight he knows,

But wherever his feet are set, his soul is forever homing,
And going, he comes, and coming he heareth a call, and goes.

Dark Voices:
He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of sorrow,
At death and dropping of leaves and the fading of suns he smiles,
For a dreamer remembers no past, and scorns the desire of tomorrow,
And a dream in a sea of doom, sets surely the ultimate isles.

All:
He who a dream hath possessed treads the impalpable marches,
From the dust of a day's long road he leaps to a laughing star,
And the ruins of world that fall he views from eternal arches,
And rides God's battlefield in a flashing and golden car.

—SHAEMUS O'SHEEL

SCRIPTURE: (Read the Scripture in two versions, King James and Moffat.)
Psalms 37:3-7. Philippians 3:12-14, 4:8.
HYMN: "We Would Be Building"²

We would be building; temples still undone
O'er crumbling walls their crosses scarcely lift;
Waiting till love can raise the broken stone,
And hearts creative bridge the human rift;
We would be building; Master, let thy plan
Reveal the life that God would give to man.

Teach us to build; upon the solid rock
We set the dream that hardens into deed,
Ribbed with the steel that time and change both mock,
Th' unfailing purpose of our noblest creed;
Teach us to build; O Master, lend us sight
To see the tower gleaming in the light.

O keep us building, Master, may our hand
Ne'er falter when the dream is in our hearts,
When to our ears there come divine commands
And all the pride of sinful will departs;
We build with thee: O grant enduring worth
Until the heav'nly Kingdom comes on earth.

—PURD E. DEITZ

READING:³

"As in heaven." Over against the actual world which he knew so well, Jesus saw an ideal world which, to his eyes, was just as real, and which, for him, was a guarantee that some day the actual world would become vastly more ideal. It is probably true of a certain type of religious person that he resorts to the thought of heaven as the Chinese coolie resorts to his opium pipe, in order that he may be transported to a world where all unpleasant things are forgotten. But when Jesus turned his thought to that ideal world where "there is joy over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, which need no repentance"; and where men who have been "persecuted for righteousness' sake" are greatly rewarded, it was not for the purpose of obtaining a momentary forgetfulness of the hard conditions which he was facing, but rather for the purpose of securing strength to face them bravely and hopefully. With what depth of emotion Jesus himself must have prayed, "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth!"

As a matter of fact, there is an ideal order to which we can turn for courage and hope. And it is not up in the skies; it is here in our midst.

There is, then, an ideal world, a "heaven," if you please, in which the will of God is being done, and to this we too may turn for spiritual re-enforcement as we endeavor to discover the divine intention for our own lives, and to realize it.

² Used by permission of author. This is sung to the hymn tune, *Finlandia*, found in the *Methodist Hymnal*. The hymn, words and music, in leaf form, may be obtained from the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Witherspoon Bldg., Philadelphia, Pa., at 25¢ a dozen.

³ From *The Prayer that Helps Us Live*, by Ernest Fremont Tittle. Copyright 1931. By permission of The Methodist Book Concern.

HYMN: "These Things Shall Be: a Loftier Race." Tune—*Thru*
PRAYER IN UNISON:

Master, give us life today,
Life strong and triumphant,
Life full, free and eternal.

Give us the fullness of spiritual life—
The abounding glory of the knowledge of thine own indwelling,
Whereby in space and time we may live the everlasting life
Which is thyself.⁴

December 11

THEME: *Thy will be done through courage.*

MUSIC: *Important Event*, by Schumann
INTERPRETER:

Never before has courage been so needed in youth as is needed today. Our parents looked out upon a world which they were told was waiting for them. All that was needed was energy and a desire to do right, then the world would be theirs. In a way that was true. The world and its goods, scientific discovery, and a development of physical sciences became their possession. Now we look out upon a world with our eyes open to needs

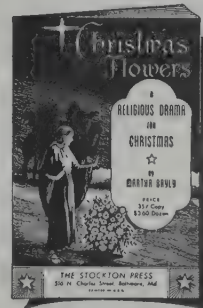
⁴ Adapted from *A Book of Prayers*, by J. S. Hoyland.

Christmas Dramas

Sacred

Christmas Flowers

By Martha Bayly



This drama is based on an old Christmas legend. The scene is set in the little town of Bethlehem. Joanna, the "Little Shepherdess" directs the wise men to the manger, who come to offer their gifts. She weeps because she has no gift to offer the Savior King. From the ground where her tears have fallen, flowers bloom. She offers a simple prayer for Aram and the unbelieving folk. Seeing the miracle Aram believes and with Joanna take the gift of flowers and the gift of self to the manger throne. The drama is climaxed with a giving service. Characters: reader, 6 men, 1 woman, 3 girls, group of children and choir. Time 1 hour. Price 35¢ copy; \$3.60 dozen.

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By Barbara Stuart and C. Harold Lowden

A secular cantata in two scenes for young people and children to be put on during Christmas week. You will adore Holly, love sweet Miss Maggie, laugh with hot-tempered Bridget and Poetical Pat. You will even like old "Scrooge" Benson as he thaws under the friendliness of the Christmas spirit. Santa Claus may or may not appear. The text provides two different endings. Five groups and five principle characters required. Living room setting. Time one hour. Price, 35¢ copy; \$3.60 dozen.

Write for Christmas Catalog

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that call for great pioneering. Vast walls confront us. Freedom of speech and freedom of press are being denied; race consciousness has arisen and conflicts result; one third of the nation is ill-clad, ill-housed, and ill-fed. We are blessed by thousands of liberties and privileges not granted to youth of other countries, so we are faced with the opportunity of sharing all that we have and know with those who have less. In turn they will give us gifts which we have never known. To build a better world we must have courage to face the facts.

HYMN: "Once to every man and nation."

Tune—*Ton-y-botel*

SCRIPTURE: The story of Daniel, interpreted in the light of his courage and the power of the presence of God in the midst of dangers, using those he faced as symbols of the dangers of our day. Daniel 6.

POEM: "Courage."⁵

Courage isn't a brilliant dash,
A daring deed in a moment's flash:
It isn't an instantaneous thing
Born of despair with a sudden spring.
It isn't a creature of flickered hope
Or the final tug at a slipping rope:
But it's something deep in the soul of man
That is working always to serve some plan.
Courage isn't the last resort

⁵ From Mr. Guest's book, *A Heap o' Livin'*. Copyright, 1916. Used by permission of The Reilly and Lee Co., Chicago, Ill.

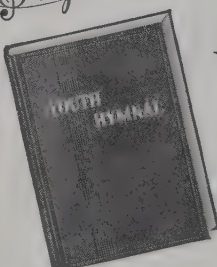
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In the work of life or the game called sport:
It isn't a thing that a man can call
At some future time when he's apt to fall;
If he hasn't it now, he will have it not
When the strain is great and the pace is hot.
For who would strive for a distant goal
Must always have courage within his soul.

—EDGAR A. GUEST

LITANY:

Leader: Lord, may we choose the hard right rather than the easy wrong.

Hymn: "Rise Up, O Men of God!" first stanza.

Leader: May we realize that we are slaves who dare not be in the right with two or three.

Hymn: Same, second stanza.

Leader: May we ask for tasks equal to our powers rather than powers equal to our tasks.

Hymn: Same, third stanza.

Leader: May we bear our cross with the triumph of courage, knowing that by so doing we shall grow into the stature of Jesus Christ, our Master.

Hymn: Same, fourth stanza.

READING:

It is good, sometimes, for one to place himself imaginatively in some preceding generation and ask himself how, in the light of history, he would have acted in that time.

I should hate to think that in the first century I would have lacked the courage to follow Jesus; or that in the second century I would have consented to burn a little incense before the statue of the Roman emperor rather than go like a man to a cross; or that in the sixteenth century I would have sided with a corrupt hierarchy rather than take my chance with the reformers. I should like to think that, in any preceding generation had I been forced to choose between the forces that were making for life and the forces that were making for death, I would have aligned myself with the former at whatever cost to myself. What, then, ought I to be doing now? Playing safe, living softly, resting content with things as they are? Or casting in my lot with those brave, unselfish spirits, who, ashamed merely to reap what others have sown, are endeavoring to make it possible for those who come after them to live in a somewhat better world?

PRAYER: Our Father, grant us courage in our everyday lives. We need thy presence to direct and to uphold us. Forgive our weaknesses and convert them into strength for thy sake. Amen.

ONE MINUTE TALKS:

First: Courage needed in school.

Second: Courage needed in work.

Third: Courage needed in recreation.

HYMN: "Be strong! We are not here to play." Tune—*Fortitude*

BENEDICTION: In the midst of the world's fierce turmoil, may we know that underneath are God's everlasting arms.

December 18

THEME: *Thy will be done on earth through peace.*

MUSIC: "Meditation," by Friml

INTERPRETER:

We are so near Christmas that the angel song of "Peace on earth, good will toward men" is coming to us now from the far off distance, trying to make us understand once more that the Kingdom was ushered in through peace. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" seems much like saying "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

The great youth conference which met in the United States this year at Vassar College and brought together representatives from twenty-six nations, had as one of its main objectives, peace on earth. Elizabeth Shields-Collins, International Secretary of the Congress, said the purpose of the conference was: "To bring young people of all nations into bonds of closer friendship, to develop mutual understanding between youth of different races, different religions, and different opinions. . . . All who wish to work for peace and who consider peaceful settlement the method for resolving international disputes, are invited to send their representatives to the second world youth congress for the study and discussion of the political, economic, and religious bases of peace, and economic and cultural status of youth, and to plan methods of collaboration which will enable young people to fulfill their responsibilities in contributing to world peace." Here, then, is one way in which we may share in the Kingdom, in contributing to the world peace.

HYMN: "The Hymn of the Nations."⁶

Tune—*Hymn to Joy*

Brother, sing your country's anthem,
Shout your land's undying flame;
Light the wondrous tale of nations
With your people's golden name.
Tell your fathers' noble story,
Raise on high your country's sign,
Join, then, in the final glory—
Brother, lift your flag with mine!

Hail the sun of peace, now rising,
Hold the war clouds closer fured.
Blend our banners, O my brother,
In the rainbow of the world!
Red as blood, and blue as heaven,
Wise as age, and proud as youth,
Melt our colors, wonder woven,
In the great white light of Truth!

Build the road of Peace before us,
Build it wide and deep and long;
Speed the slow and check the eager,
Help the weak and curb the strong.
None shall push aside another,
None shall let another fall;
March beside me, O my brother,
All for one, and one for all!

SCRIPTURE: The laws of the Kingdom: the Beatitudes. Matthew 5:3-12

LITANY FOR PEACE:⁷

Leader: Remember, O Lord, the peoples of the world divided into many nations and tongues; deliver us from every evil which obstructs thy saving purpose; and fulfil thy promises of old to establish thy Kingdom of peace. From the curse of war and all that begets it,

Response: O Lord, deliver us.

Leader: From believing and speaking lies against other nations,

Response: O Lord, deliver us.

Leader: From narrow loyalties and selfish isolation,

Response: O Lord, deliver us.

Leader: From fear and distrust of other nations, from all false pride, vainglory, and self-conceit,

Response: O Lord, deliver us.

Leader: From the lust of the mighty for riches, that drives peaceful people to slaughter,

Response: O Lord, deliver us.

Leader: From putting our trust in the weapons of war, and from want of faith in the power of justice and good will,

Response: O Lord, deliver us.

Leader: From every thought, word, and deed which divides the human family and separates us from the perfect realization of thy love,

Response: O Lord, deliver us.

(Continued on page 43)

⁶ Used by permission of the League of Nations Association and C. C. Birchard and Co., publishers. Found in *Singing Worship*, Abingdon Press.

⁷ Page 54, *The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory*, Part III of the Grey Book, American edition. Copyright by the Oxford University Press. Used by permission.

Gifts

(Continued from page 11)

Low voices: Giver of all good gifts, deep is our gratitude; our gratitude for star, for song, for thy Son.

High voices: Glory to God in the highest—And on earth—Peace.

Low voices: Thy spirit finds not a crowded inn, but a welcome home within our lives.

High voices: Glory to God in the highest—And on earth—Peace.

Leader: We worship the Christ, not alone with words of praise, but with service. The Christ of Bethlehem, grown to manhood, taught his disciples, saying, "Inasmuch as ye do it unto the least of these my brethren, ye do it unto me."

All voices: We bring the work of our minds and of our hands.

High voices: Bridges, houses, stores, and temples.

Low voices: Great ships, and winged birds of air.

High voices: Music going out over great distances, and little songs, within our homes.

Low voices: Pictures painted with the brush of love and faith.

High voices: Crooked bodies, made straight.

Low voices: Blinded eyes, which now can see.

High voices: Silent lives, now awake to sound.

Low voices: Books, and poems, and sermons.

High voices: And all messages of good will.

Women's voices: Humbler works of our hands: a bit of weaving, a house made clean, food for the hungry, care of little children, the round of daily duties.

Men's voices: The strength of our bodies, the best of our minds.

All voices: With these gifts, and with the gift of prayer, we keep the Mass of the Christ.

Leader: He came long years ago. And yet tonight we feel his presence in our lives.

All voices: His birth, his life,
His ministry, his healing,
His teaching, his understanding,
His courage, his sacrificial death,
His glorious resurrection,
His peace of spirit, and of mind;
All these give evidence.
The very God himself . . . in us.
. . . Emmanuel.

Leader: To him we bring the gift of love.

All voices: Love for our own,
Love for our friends both near and far,

Love for our children, kindred to the Babe of Bethlehem,
Love for the stranger, who needs our understanding.

Love for enemies, that we may truly forgive,

Love, a more abundant love within our homes—that they may be fit places where the Master may find welcome,

Love, unselfish, for our church, . . . Christ's church,

Love, for God the Father,

Love for the Babe of Star, and Song.
We pray you, Christ, accept our gift. Our soul's best gift, our love.

THE GIFTS:⁶

High voices:

"Gold and frankincense and myrrh—three words

Whose great significance should catch the breath!

A symbol of his kingship was the gold,

The frankincense, a symbol of his death.

The myrrh was his High Priesthood—strange rare gifts

That through the centuries would signify

The way the little new-born Christ would live,

The way that he would die."

Low voices:

"What gifts of love, O Master, can I bring:

Plain gifts that would be mine alone to give?

Prophetic gifts to tell how I shall die,

Significant of how I, too, shall live?

The golden gifts of love, perhaps, dear Lord,

As homage freely laid before thy feet;

The frankincense of selflessness, and myrrh

Of kindness, fragrant, sweet."

All voices:

"Accept my gifts to day as if they were
Gold and frankincense and myrrh."

HYMN: "Silent Night."

BENEDICTION: O God, may the star of hope be our guide, alway.

May the song of joy ring in our hearts even above the noise and strife of our cluttered living.

And may we not forget to keep Christmas, alway.

O Christ, may we bring thee our gifts of reverence, of quiet confidence, and sincere love. May we take time to keep thy Mass. Amen.

⁶ "The Gifts," by Grace Noll Crowell, published in *The International Journal of Religious Education*, December, 1937.

Experiences in the Nursery Class

(Continued from page 16)

from the plaything box): Philip, will you please let me take some blocks? I want to make a table.

Philip: Sure, you can take some of these. (He pointed to some blocks. His building had been taken down and he was now playing "garage" with the extra blocks for trucks and cars.)

Suzanne: Philip, I have to have another block like this.

Philip: There isn't another one.

Leader: Philip, I see another block like that in the wall of your garage. Can't you use this smaller one there?

Philip (Changing the blocks and discovering an improvement to his garage): See, now I have a door over here.

Suzanne: You didn't know you wanted a door there, did you?

Philip (Laughing): No, now the cars can go out of this door.

Soon Joyce, aged one and a half years, came in. Perhaps the most important contribution she has made to the class is to provide an opportunity for the older children to feel a responsibility in caring for a younger child. Joyce sat near Helen with a doll, which she was holding. Philip left his play and came over to her.

Philip: Don't you want to put your dolly in the chair?

He carefully took it from her and arranged it in the chair and set it in front of Joyce. Then he went back to his play.

Mildred had been watching the others for a time. She always likes the stories best, so the leader brought out the story paper for the day and told her the story. Suzanne came over and listened, too. The leader showed them a large picture, "The Harvest," showing a barn with baskets of vegetables and the farmer bringing in a wheelbarrow load of cabbages. The children were interested in naming the vegetables. The leader was able to bring out the fact that the Heavenly Father sent the rain and the sunshine to make the seeds grow.

Philip: I am sorry, Suzanne, but I will have to use your blocks.

Suzanne: All right.

Philip (To leader): Do you want to go fishing?

Leader: Thank you, Philip, I would like to go fishing. May Suzanne and Mildred come too?

Philip: Yes, come and get your boat.

By this time Philip had built a dock and as we came over he gave each of us a fishing boat. He explained that this one had a small motor, but they had them with big motors, too. The boat was a block which we ran by pushing it along the floor with our hands.

We heard the warning bell for the close of the session, and that means "Pick up your playthings." Helen helped Joyce pick up the letter blocks with which they had been playing. The other children sorted the large blocks in separate piles according to their size and shoved them over to the big box to be packed in by the Leader. Even Joyce caught on to the idea and helped take care of the miscellaneous toys. When the closing bell sounded, the room was in perfect order.

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The Topaz of Ethiopia

(Continued from page 21)

you are one crazy fool!

CHARLIE (*Angry*): Fool? Don't you dare call me a fool! You little shrivelled up foreigner!

OBATA (*Bursting with anger*): All right! I beg to say that I have no desire to possess your ancient stone! (*He goes to street door and out.*)

HAMMERSTEIN: The Japanese gentleman is very angry. Perhaps if I follow him—(*He goes out quickly as CHARLIE speaks.*)

CHARLIE: He's mad all right!

(HAMMERSTEIN'S suitcase is left behind. CHARLIE looks surprised, comes out and carries it to his office, returns and begins to light the lamps which are in standards on the wall on either side of his window. He turns as LEAH enters at left. She is a very attractive young woman, Jewish, but with features not very pronounced. She is shy and troubled. She stands just inside the door—to CHARLIE, a vision of great loveliness.)

LEAH: Are you the station agent?

CHARLIE: Yes, Miss. Anything I can do for you?

LEAH (*Looking around doubtfully*): It would be quite all right for me to stay here until the train comes?

CHARLIE: Sure, Miss.

LEAH (*Coming forward*): You see, I got very tired on the train—just waiting. I thought perhaps I could be warmer here. (*She looks around.*) This is a quaint place. I mean it's strange this accident happened in such an out-of-the-way spot. And on this night, too. Not that Christmas means much to me—but the other passengers seem to care. (*She is about to sit on bench at left.*)

CHARLIE: Here, let me dust that seat. (*He uses a soiled handkerchief*)

LEAH: Oh, thank you. You are very kind.

CHARLIE (*Going to stove and opening a draft*): Had a hard trip? You look sort of all in.

LEAH: Yes, a very hard trip.

CHARLIE: Going far?

LEAH (*Looking at him closely*): It's strange to be talking to you—somebody I never saw—in a place like this.

CHARLIE: Oh, that's O. K. You can trust Old Charlie!

LEAH (*Smiling faintly*): Oh, yes. I'm sure of it—but surely you aren't so old.

CHARLIE: It's the job, I guess, makes me feel old. Sorto' monotonous, except when something like this happens.

LEAH: It would be.

CHARLIE (*Returning to the lamps, adjusting their wicks*): Days will be gettin' longer now.

LEAH: The days are too long—for me.

CHARLIE: Maybe you don't like your job.

LEAH: Well, you see, I'm not sure I have one.

CHARLIE (*Standing with one foot on the stove, facing Leah*): Oh, I say that's tough!

LEAH: I've just joined the troupe. The manager said he thought he could give

me a small part when we get to Chicago. Vaudeville, you know—Broadway Burlesquers.

CHARLIE (*Looking her over doubtfully*): Ever been in a show before?

LEAH: Oh, I've tried all sorts of things. A girl has to do something if she's on her own.

CHARLIE: Sure. I know. Hard times for everybody.

LEAH: I've never had hard times until now. I've had a good home and love and care. (*She begins to cry softly into her hands. Charlie is puzzled. He has had no experience with a weeping girl. She seems to have no handkerchief. He reaches in his pocket and brings out the soiled one with which he dusted the bench. He considers it and decides it really will not do. He feels in the other pocket and brings out the box with the topaz in it. He sits down beside her and opens the box.*)

CHARLIE (*Talking as if to a child*): Here. Want to see something?

LEAH: What is it? (*She produces a handkerchief and dries her eyes.*) How silly I am, crying like this! What is the stone? May I hold it?

CHARLIE: Sure. I don't know what it is. A queer nut left it here a while ago. I thought it was some kind of a joke, but a Jew that was here says it's worth a lot of money. He called it the Topaz of Ethiopia.

(*During the next entrance LEAH is absorbed in contemplation of the stone and does not seem to notice. A poor workman and wife enter at door on right. TOM HARRIS is a man of medium size, clean, but lacking a hair-cut, wearing ill-fitting suit, poor shoes, blue shirt, no tie. He has the appearance of having tried to "dress up," an unusual occurrence. His wife is small, poorly dressed in shabby coat and hat. She looks cold, afraid, and worn. She shows by her frequent glances at her husband that she has great confidence in him and is devoted to him. Both carry poorly wrapped bundles and boxes. These characters should not cause a laugh, but should rather arouse sympathy.*)

CHARLIE (*Walking toward them*): Come on in. Nothing to be afraid of. Did you want something?

HARRIS: You think the train will go to Chicago? Our boy—he sent us the money to come to see him at Christmas. He has a job there, doin' pretty well. The wife—she ain't never been on a train much. She's nervous, when it stops.

CHARLIE: Oh it'll go fast enough when they get those empties off the track. Sit down over there.

(*They hesitate, and then go to the bench on right, where they arrange and rearrange their bundles, Harris looks at his ticket, etc. CHARLIE returns to the bench where Leah has been holding the topaz.*)

LEAH: The Topaz of Ethiopia! I have heard of this stone.

CHARLIE (*Sitting down on the edge of the bench*): Well, that's funny!

LEAH (*Her eyes glowing and her face becoming very beautiful*): I have heard of it from my father, and my grand-

father! I love the soft shine of it, and the feeling of it in my fingers. (*She holds it in her palm, her face showing that some struggle is going on within her. She lifts it between thumb and finger of left hand, then stands and holds it between her eye and the light. She does this, not as if questioning its genuineness but to enjoy its beauty and to feel its power. CHARLIE watches her steadily. She sits down, places the stone in its box and it rests in her lap. She is very quiet.*)

LEAH: Is there something—peculiar about it?

CHARLIE (*Laughing*): Well, the old Hebrew said there was; and something did have a funny effect on him. I thought when he come in he was a shrewd old Jew I'd have to watch, but he sounded like a book of the Bible before he went out!

LEAH: There was a story connected with it. (*She loses herself in thought as she places the lid on the box and hands it back to CHARLIE. She rises, a look of happy determination upon her face.*) I'm going back. When can I get a train back?

CHARLIE (*Standing*): East, you mean?

LEAH: Yes. East. To my father! I should never have left him!

CHARLIE: Well, No. 5's due in thirty minutes. 'Course, if they don't get the track cleared—

LEAH: I'll wait. (*She sits down again, now watching with interest all that is going on.*)

HARRIS (*Coming to CHARLIE*): The wife wants to know can we eat? She has a box she fixed at home.

CHARLIE: Well, it'll kind of smell up the place, but go ahead. It's a free country, I reckon, 'specially at Christmas. (*HARRIS goes back to his seat and they open a box and begin to eat. It is a long and absorbing process. They do not notice much of what is happening.*)

OBATA (*Entering at left, as at first in very good humor and very pompous*): I have return to buy the topaz. I will give you one hundred cartwheels!

CHARLIE: Nothing doing.

OBATA: What? You will not sell for one hundred dollars? Let me politely say you are one big fool!

CHARLIE: Stop calling me a fool, I tell you! Politely or any other way! I told you it was worth five hundred dollars, and (*with a glance at Leah*) I have doubled the price! And get out of here, you—(*Leah runs to Charlie and with her hand on his arm stops his words.*)

LEAH: Don't! Don't call him names! (*He turns and looks at her wonderingly. In her face is the expression of great hope that he may understand. MRS. CALDWELL'S entrance at left breaks the spell. She is a large, arrogant, expensively dressed woman. She lifts her lorgnette and looks about.*)

MRS. CALDWELL: Is there a station agent here?

CHARLIE: I'm him, lady.

MRS. CALDWELL: When is this train leaving? I never heard of such a ridiculous delay! And of all times! On Christmas eve! There won't be a tree or a string of tinsel in the Truslow Caldwell house until I get there! And guests to-

morrow! We've been sitting there in the middle of a corn field for hours, *hours*, and all because a few empty freight cars fell over on the track!

CHARLIE: It's too bad, lady. I didn't make 'em do it!

MRS. CALDWELL: Can't you do something about it? Somebody'll have to do something! I'll wire my husband! He has influence! A blank, please, or do you have such a thing as a telegraph blank in this dreadful little hole? (*Suddenly she sees HARRIS and his wife, lifts her lorgnette and thus turns the attention of all in the direction of the two. OBATA is quick to catch the meaning of her look of disgust, and wishes to stand well with this aristocrat.*)

OBATA (*Shrugging his shoulders*): Me—I don't like the smell, either!

MRS. CALDWELL (*Sniffing*): Onions! Or is it garlic? How can anyone eat in a place like this? And such food! I suppose they couldn't get what they like on the diner!

LEAH (*Touching her*): Please, lady! MRS. CALDWELL (*Turning upon her haughtily*): What do you want?

LEAH (*Turning her back upon the HARRISES and facing MRS. CALDWELL squarely*): Did you ever work? *Work with your hands?* Till you were sore in every bone and muscle of your body? I have! I know how it feels! That's what these people do! Did you ever *not* have enough money to eat in a diner or even sit up at a five and ten counter and order a hot dog? I have, and let me tell you that if you're really hungry a bread and margarine sandwich with a slice of onion tastes good!

MRS. CALDWELL (*Backing off*): Well! Mr.—station agent, do you often have such a champion of the lower classes visit your station? You really should provide her with a soap box!

(CHARLIE and OBATA have stood open-mouthed during this unexpected speech. There is a slight pause, and then OBATA smilingly breaks the tension.)

OBATA: I like to—what you say? change subject! The train, I think it move forward now in ten—fifteen minutes. Before that, once more I wish to see the beautiful stone. Maybe I pay you two hundred dollars—maybe three hundred!

MRS. CALDWELL: What stone, may I ask? Is there a stone? I know about stones! My husband is Truslow Caldwell, the dealer in precious stones. Let me see it, whoever has it. I may want it. (CHARLIE produces the box, opens it and carefully holds it in his hand. HARRIS, seeing that there is something interesting, comes to the group and looks over OBATA's shoulder. CHARLIE occupies the center of the group as the four gather close to look at the stone. Someone jostles his arm and the box and jewel drop to the floor. When he stoops to pick it up, he finds the box empty, and the stone not to be seen.)

CHARLIE (*Turning fiercely on OBATA*): You rascal! Lose my stone, will you?

LEAH (*Again touching his arm as if to keep him from saying the words*): We

can find it. It can't be lost! Do you have a flash light?

(CHARLIE hands her one from his pocket and is going to join her in the search but MRS. CALDWELL speaks and he stops. LEAH starts a systematic search with her back to the group, beginning at the extreme back-left of stage and examining the floor. She seems to pay no attention to the others.)

MRS. CALDWELL: Somebody did that for a reason! Knocking it out of your hand! There's a thief here! This Jewess! She pretends to be looking for it. You heard how she talked! She's a radical of some kind!

CHARLIE (*Not at all pleased with this accusation but puzzled*): No, you're wrong there, lady!

MRS. CALDWELL: Or this Jap! I had a Jap chauffeur once. He stole the silver handles off my car! (MRS. CALDWELL and CHARLIE turn on OBATA.)

CHARLIE: I don't trust any of these Orientals! Hand it over if you don't want trouble. Where'd you put it?

OBATA (*Angry but unafraid*): Why you think I steal? I say I pay you for it!

CHARLIE: Come across! There'd be a lot less trouble in this country if all you foreigners would stay where you belong.

OBATA: Who made this country? You think maybe you are God of America! You act like you make this United States, all for pure white man!

MRS. CALDWELL: He ought to be deported for that speech!

CHARLIE: Move your foot! (OBATA steps over and CHARLIE and MRS. CALDWELL look carefully where he has stood. HAMMERSTEIN enters left. He stops and looks at the group. LEAH does not turn.)

HAMMERSTEIN: My bag, please. I left it. What has happened here?

MRS. CALDWELL: The topaz! It is gone! A case of thievery.

HAMMERSTEIN: The Topaz of Ethiopia—lost?

(LEAH hears her father's voice, turns, stands astonished and runs to his arms.)

LEAH: Father!

HAMMERSTEIN: Leah! My daughter! How can this be? Why are you here? But no thing matters, now that I have found you!

LEAH: Can you forgive me, Father?

HAMMERSTEIN: Forgive? I was wrong, my daughter! I drove you from me! But Jehovah is plenteous in mercy! He has restored you to me!

LEAH: It was the Topaz, Father! When I held it in my hand I knew how I had hurt you with my disobedience to the law. I was going home, to you!

MRS. CALDWELL: Surely we have nothing to do with this touching reconciliation! Has everyone forgotten that a jewel has been taken? I think, Mr. station agent, you have not thought of the real thief. How easy in all the confusion for this fellow (*She points to HARRIS*) to hide it about his person! (*All turn to HARRIS, who, understanding, is so frightened he can scarcely speak.*)

HARRIS: You think—I took the stone? Why, I don't know nothin' about it!

MRS. CALDWELL: That's easy to say.

CHARLIE: Who are you anyway?

HARRIS: My name is Harris. Tom Harris. I work in a shoe factory. I never took a cent in my life that didn't belong to me.

MRS. CALDWELL: Look at his shoes! You'd think if he worked in a shoe factory—

CHARLIE: Come on, Harris. You too, you Jew, help me search this fellow. We'll take him in the office.

(MRS. HARRIS has been greatly agitated and now runs to the group.)

MRS. HARRIS: No! No! You can't take my husband! He's good! He's honest!

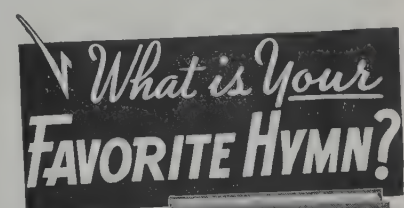
LEAH (*Going to her and slipping her arm in hers*): Of course he is! Listen, all of you. There are fifty cracks in this floor big enough to hide the topaz! I've looked with a flashlight through ten of them and haven't found it, but that's no reason I can't if I have time. And you all stand here accusing someone of stealing it!

(*There is the sound of singing outside. Girls' voices are singing some familiar carol. All listen and almost at once four young girls come in at right. They are very full of life and good humor and the contrast with the serious group of adults is marked. One carries a box in which coins rattle.*)

ALL GIRLS: Merry Christmas, Charlie!

FIRST GIRL: What a lot of people!

SECOND GIRL: We ought to get a lot of money here!



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THIRD GIRL: Come on, all of you. Be generous!

MRS. CALDWELL: What's this hold-up for, may I ask?

FIRST GIRL: The hospital, of course. We do it every year.

FOURTH GIRL (*Passing the box*): What's the matter, Charlie? Why so glum? Don't you know it's Christmas?

CHARLIE: (*Dropping some money in the box*): Run along. It don't seem like Christmas here.

MRS. CALDWELL: I doubt if the hospital ever sees it, but take this. (*She drops a dollar bill in the box.*)

MRS. HARRIS (*Touching her husband's arm*): They say it's for the hospital. Do you think we could spare a little something?

(*Everybody contributes something, OBATA displaying a huge roll of bills and being sure that everyone sees it.*)

ALL GIRLS (*One after the other*): Thanks a lot! Merry Christmas!

(*They dash out, but at the door the last one stops, stoops to tie her shoe and picks up the jewel. She turns back and brings it to Charlie.*)

FOURTH GIRL: Charlie, see what I found! It must be a set from a ring someone has lost! (*She hands it to him and runs out. Outside there is the sound of singing. There is a silence. CHARLIE rolls the stone about in his hand and tries to speak but fails. He looks at LEAH as if for help, and she smiles, as she stands, one arm in her father's and one in that of MRS. HARRIS.*)

MRS. CALDWELL: Now that the topaz, if that's what it is, has been found, I would like to talk about buying it.

HAMMERSTEIN (*As if afraid it will be sold*): It is priceless, madam!

CHARLIE (*Looking from one to the other and speaking more slowly than usual*): I'm afraid it isn't mine to sell.

MRS. CALDWELL: Not yours?

CHARLIE: No, it's not mine. It was just left here. I know now I can't sell it.

LEAH: Would you mind letting her hold it in her hand?

CHARLIE: That's all right, but I can't sell it.

(*He gives it to LEAH, who holds it where all may see.*)

LEAH (*To MRS. CALDWELL*): Here, take it. But first remove your glove.

MRS. CALDWELL (*Doing so*): I don't see why. (*She takes the stone and examines it carefully, not speaking.*)

MRS. HARRIS (*To her husband*): I think I had better get ready. The train might come. (*She goes to her seat and begins to tie up her packages.*)

OBATA: The lady take a long time to see the topaz!

MRS. CALDWELL: It is a beautiful jewel. (*She looks about the little group and every eye is on her.*) Nothing in my husband's collection equals it. (*The lines of haughty egotism are vanishing from her face and she is speaking quite simply.*) There is something about a jewel as clear and lovely as this that makes one sorry for all the harsh words one has spoken, and all the unkind thoughts one has ever had.

OBATA (*Bending to look at the stone in her extended palm*): But I would like to feel the stone. Maybe I offer four hundred dollars for it! If it feel right!

MRS. CALDWELL: Here. I can't buy it. I think nobody can buy it. But that doesn't matter. It seems to belong to all of us!

OBATA (*Taking the stone*): Ho! It is soft. Not hard like a diamond! Worthless! (*Suddenly he stops short, and looks puzzled.*)

HAMMERSTEIN: The Ethiopian Topaz, my brother, is not a hard stone like the others of that name. It is soft, almost pliable in one's fingers. Yet it is most rare and costly.

OBATA (*More slowly than he has yet spoken*): I see. I understand, maybe. Some stones are hard. Some soft. Just same as some red, some yellow, some crystal—all very nice. Is that not so? And people—they not all alike, either? But all kinds pretty good, maybe? Here, Brother.

(*He tries to give it to HARRIS, who, remembering his late experience, is afraid to touch it.*)


HARRIS: No. No. Why do you call me brother? A while ago, you thought I was a thief.

OBATA (*Smiling*): That was while ago. This is now!

CHARLIE: Nothing to be afraid of now, Harris.

(*HARRIS takes the stone, still rather doubtful. His wife comes shyly forward, carrying a wreath of evergreens tied with a red ribbon. She goes to CHARLIE.*)

MRS. HARRIS: Here. You take this.



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You don't have a thing Christmasy. I made two. One's enough for my boy.

CHARLIE: Well, that's nice. Thanks a lot. (*He hangs the wreath over one of the lights.*)

HARRIS: Here's your gem. It's real nice. (*Charlie takes it.*)

LEAH: Mrs. Harris is the only one who hasn't touched the stone.

CHARLIE: And she don't need to. I guess. I'll bet she never had any hard feelin's toward anybody!

MRS. HARRIS: I'd kind o' like to touch it, though.

CHARLIE: Sure. It's not mine, anyway. If it was—I think I'd give it to you! (*He puts it in her hand.*)

MRS. HARRIS (*Catching her breath*): Oh! Ain't it pretty?

(*There is a shrill train whistle. MRS. CALDWELL is first to hurry out, but at the door she calls back.*)

MRS. CALDWELL: Goodnight everyone, and a happy Christmas!

(*MRS. HARRIS gives the stone to CHARLIE who is on his way to get HAMMERSTEIN's suitcase, joins her husband and they leave hastily, OBATA hurrying after them, calling.*)

OBATA: Say, you, maybe I carry some of your packages!

(*HAMMERSTEIN gets his suitcase and is hurrying his daughter out. She stops, breaks away and speaks to CHARLIE very sincerely.*)

LEAH: Thank you. I may never see you again. I can't tell how grateful I am.

CHARLIE (*Embarrassed but pleased*): I don't know what for, but it's all right. I—can't say what I want to. I never liked Jews much—

HAMMERSTEIN: Come, daughter.

(*There is an understanding smile upon LEAH's face as she goes. CHARLIE snatches some papers from the shelf, dropping stone and box upon it, and goes out to the train. There is the sound of it departing. The TRAVLER walks in. He pauses in the center of the stage as if sensing the things that have happened there. He walks to the window, picks up*

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the stone and placing it in the box, keeps it in his hand to the end of the play. When CHARLIE returns, whistling, the TRAVELER is standing not far from the window, side to audience.)

CHARLIE: Oh! You here again?

TRAVELER: I returned for the Topaz, my friend.

CHARLIE: You just about lost it. And some folks wanted to buy it. You know, it's queer. I thought I had a right to sell it!

TRAVELER: But you learned you had no right to sell it?

CHARLIE: Sure. When I touched the thing, I knew right way. (He stands deep in thought.) Why, this is funny, come to think about it!

TRAVELER: Did you need the Topaz?

CHARLIE: Why, I guess I did need it! A freight piled up in front of 28 down the track. The passengers come up here to wait, some of 'em. There was a Jew from Germany that had quarreled with his daughter over their religion. Nice thing to quarrel about, wasn't it? She showed up, too, and they've gone back home together.

TRAVELER: You see religion means a great deal to a Jew.

CHARLIE: Then there was a Jap. (Rather shamefacedly) I didn't get along very well with him—

TRAVELER: Who?

CHARLIE: A Jap, you know. A Japanese. After that a society dame—I mean "lady"—was high and mighty with all of us, but she got over it. Everybody that touched that little stone wasn't the same afterwards. Why, take me for instance. I've always hated foreigners.

TRAVELER: Who?

CHARLIE: Foreigners, you know. People from other countries. America for Americans, I've always said.

TRAVELER: And now?

CHARLIE (Smiling good-naturedly): Say, the Jews are mighty fine people if these two were any sample. Trouble with the Jap—I mean the Japanese—It's awful hard for me to like a fellow of another color, but this one sure turned out to be a pretty good sort! There was a couple of workin' people come in, too, but they didn't seem to need the Topaz. (Suddenly he peers into the face of the TRAVELER, reaching up and pushing back the hood slightly. His face registers surprise that turns to awe. He can hardly speak.) Why—why—You look exactly like the pictures! If you're not him, you're somebody like him! (He drops his hands to his sides and speaks half to himself.) This is all so queer. What's been goin' on here tonight? A man comin' in and leavin' a little yellow piece of glass and everybody actin' different as soon as he touched it! It ain't sensible. Folks don't change so fast—

TRAVELER: No. It would be well if they could. But this is just the beginning. It's not hard to begin to be different, is it? Not if you have a little help, at Christmas?

CHARLIE (Still amazed): Maybe not. I don't know. But why did you come here? To this little place? If you're goin' to carry that stone around to get people started to understandin' each other, why don't you go to New York or Chicago where there's lots of folks?

TRAVELER: Well, you see, I feel at home here. Do you mind if I sit down? I have traveled far.

CHARLIE (Pulling up a chair and seating him, side to audience, Charlie stands with one foot on the stove): Sure. Stay awhile.

TRAVELER: Yes, I feel at home in a small place. In fact I was born in a town about the size of this one. And I grew up in another. It's noisy in cities. It's not so easy to get people to stop and listen.

CHARLIE: I see. You sorto' like us common folks.

TRAVELER: The common people have always heard me gladly.

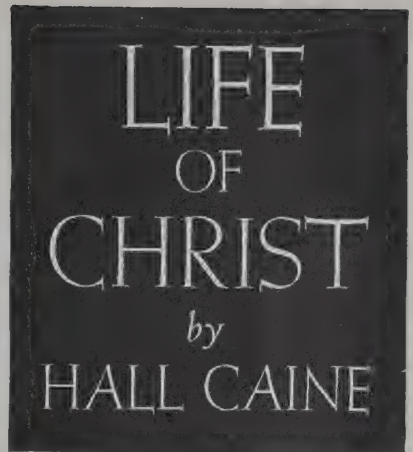
CHARLIE: But where did you get that—trinket?

TRAVELER: This? (He closes his hand over the box.) A man brought it to me when I was a baby. From Egypt, I think it was. My mother saved it for me. I carry it with me when I visit the villages on Christmas eve. Men must be taught to live at peace, some in one way, some in another. I can teach only a few at a time. You have learned tonight, Charlie. (As his name is spoken, CHARLIE'S face is full of light.) After this you will not be talking about foreigners and Japs and Sheenies and Niggers. You will remember that they are all people.

(He stands and moves toward the door, then stops.) What, then, is the Topaz, Charlie? It is a Spirit of Life, a way of thinking, a touch of understanding that through me can come into the hearts of men. . . . It is a glow of quick sympathy. . . . It is a cup of cold water to human need. . . . It is that in the heart from which come feeding of the hungry, clothing of the naked, healing of the sick, the visit of love to those bound in prisons. . . . For, those whom I touch are changed. I must go now. There are other places that need the Topaz. It is slow coming—peace on earth.

(There is a sudden flash as at first and the TRAVELER is gone. The curtain falls as CHARLIE hurries to the door to look after him.)

(The young woman who speaks the prolog now steps in front of the curtain and recites the following epilog and prayer in a reverent manner, as a worshipful climax to the play.)



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EPILOG

Such is the legend; that a Wise Man brought

An Ethiopian Topaz to the Child.

A topaz, sung by Job, and vainly sought
By many men who were by greed be-
guiled.

A famous topaz, touchstone for the soul,
Beyond all purchase, far beyond all price,
For he who felt its magic, saw his goal
A realm of evil or a Paradise.

And in our world today the Stranger
brings

To those who touch it a transforming
power—

It gives weak souls the panoply of kings
And to all threadbare hearts a priceless
dower.

The Christ child's spirit falls like
Christmas snow,
Transforming with its beauty high and
low.

Let us all pray:

"Eternal Spirit of Good Will, roaming
the centuries and the earth, seeking to
change the hard and hateful hearts of
all who will let thee touch them.

"Come thou into our open and recep-
tive hearts in these moments of quiet. Lay
thy healing touch upon our hates for
each other. Open our eyes to see the
buried good and the broken hopes of those
we love least. Solemnize us with the
thought of how often and how deeply
we have had to be helped, and under-
stood, and forgiven. Thus, may we help,
and, understand, and forgive. In the name
of him whose touch transforms all.
Amen."

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Personal Notes

- ❖ REV. I. GEORGE NACE, formerly of Tillamook, Oregon, has succeeded Dr. E. C. Farnham as Executive Secretary of the Portland Council of Churches and of the Oregon Council of Churches.
- ❖ MISS WILMA MACFARLAND, former editor of *The Portal*, a story paper for intermediate girls in the Methodist Episcopal Church, has resigned to become editor of *Child Life*, a monthly magazine published by the Rand McNally Co. For a number of years Miss MacFarland was on the story paper staff of the Methodist Book Concern, handling various publications. Perhaps no one in the country is better informed as to the source of excellent material for children's magazines, or more capable of securing the cooperation of writers in the field. Miss MacFarland's appointment as creative editor of a ranking juvenile magazine is evidence of the high quality of the church school story papers of today.
- ❖ MR. J. S. PETER has resigned as General Secretary of the Oklahoma Council of Christian Education. His resignation took effect July 1, but he is remaining in an emeritus position to look after the county conventions this fall. His successor as Acting General Secretary is Rev. Melvin C. Dorsett, who for some time was connected with the Wichita Council of Churches.
- ❖ MR. ROBERT M. HOPKINS, Jr., began during the summer his work on the field staff of the Disciples of Christ, becoming director of religious education for the Oklahoma churches of that denomination. He was formerly Minister of Education at the First Christian Church of Louisville, Kentucky.
- ❖ DR. PAUL H. BUCHHOLZ, for the past three years Executive Secretary of the northern area of the California Church Council, recently entered a new field of service as Pacific Region Secretary of the Associated Boards for Christian Colleges in China. This organization represents twelve Christian universities and colleges of China as the united effort of twenty-two major missionary societies of the United States, Canada and Great Britain.
- ❖ DR. S. N. VASS, for a number of years Director of Religious Education in the Department of Religious Education of the National Baptist Convention, U. S. A. (Incorporated), died in September. He had been an active leader in his own denomination and in many interests of the International Council.
- ❖ DR. MARK RICH, secretary of the Rural Institute at Cornell University

and director of rural work of the New York State Council of Churches, has resigned from both of these responsibilities and accepted the invitation of the Northern Baptist Convention to become secretary of rural work.

❖ MR. EDGAR S. RYDER of Cobleskill, New York, the oldest trustee on the Board of the State Council of Churches, passed away recently. For more than forty years he was identified with the religious educational work of New York State and had given very largely of his time and money for the former State Sunday School Association and lately for the State Council of Churches. He was the moving spirit in the Schoharie County Council of Churches and Religious Education and never failed to attend the county conventions and executive committee meetings. The whole weight of his influence and personality was behind the work of Christian education and his church.

❖ MR. JOHN D. DUFF, for some years president of the Allegheny County Sabbath School Association with headquarters at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, presented his resignation on account of impairment of his health. Mr. Duff has given effective leadership to the important program being carried on cooperatively among the churches of the county through the County Association. The reports of the work published in the yearbook of the Association issued in connection with the annual convention the first of October indicate significant developments carried on. Special emphasis is being given this year to the program for the increasing of Sunday school attendance under the church school advance. Dr. J. Kirkwood Craig is general secretary of the Association.

❖ ON SEPTEMBER FIRST Miss Elizabeth S. Hanson joined the staff of the Minnesota Council of Religious Education as Director of Weekday Church Schools and Children's Work. Miss Hanson is a graduate of Oberlin College, has her Master's Degree in Religious Education from Andover-Newton Theological Seminary and has taken graduate work in Columbia and Northwestern Universities. In addition to experience in local church work she has been a teacher in the Dayton Weekday Church Schools, has directed Vacation Church Schools for several summers, has supervised Vacation Schools in southern Ohio among the underprivileged children. Until January Miss Hanson will visit Weekday Church Schools throughout the state and meet with workers with children.

❖ REV. HERMAN SWEET, for a number of years Director of Religious Edu-

cation at the Westminster Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, now serves in a similar capacity in the Church of the Redeemer, New Haven, Connecticut. He began his new work on September 1. He will also carry on studies in the Yale Divinity School.

General Notes

- ❖ THIS year marks the thirty-second annual Christmas Seal Sale of the National Tuberculosis Association. In 1907, when the first Seal Sale was held, tuberculosis was the leading cause of death. Now it stands in seventh place, but it still kills more people between the ages of fifteen and forty-five than any other disease. So, while the campaign for the prevention and control of tuberculosis has achieved much, it is obvious that the fight must continue. The sale of Christmas Seals makes this possible.
- ❖ THE children of Spain have given an eager reception to the Friendship Suitcases which have already been sent by children's groups in every state of the United States. These suitcases may be purchased for \$1.00 from the Committee on World Friendship among Children, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York City, which also sends directions for packing. They are filled with clothing, toys, soap, toothpaste, and the like. This is a non partisan project and the suitcases are delivered to desperately needy refugee children on both sides by the American Friends Service Committee. The Committee is glad also to receive cash contributions from those who wish to share in the sending of these gifts.
- ❖ AT THE REQUEST of the general secretary of the New York State Council of Churches, the State Board of Regents has appointed a special committee, consisting of Regents Owen D. Young, Roland B. Woodward and Susan Brandeis, with Chancellor Thomas J. Mangan and Vice Chancellor Wm. J. Wallin as ex-officio members, to confer with a committee from the State Council of Churches and a similar committee from the Catholic and Jewish educational groups in reference to released time for weekday religious instruction. The leaders of the State Council say that it is expected that from this conference will come a united front by the three major faiths for a strong program of religious education on released time for school pupils of New York State, as well as a clearer interpretation and more explicit regulation so as to remove the uncertainty which now obtains in some places. This action has been taken because of the conviction that an enduring democracy and a stable government cannot be built on a pagan citizenship.

CURRENT FILM ESTIMATES

Affairs of Annabel (Jack Oakie, Lucille Ball) (RKO) Crazy farce comedy, more burlesque than satire on Hollywood. One-track-mind press-agent puts heroine through incredibly absurd situations to build up her screen reputation. Ridiculously exaggerated, continuous nonsense, very funny to many.

For A: Hardly For Y: Fair For C: No

Army Girl (Preston Foster, Madge Evans) (Republic) Legitimate thrills at desert Cavalry Post over tests to decide replacement of horses by mobile tanks, involving well tangled romance between rival captains and colonel's charming daughter. Well acted, human interest comedy.

For A: Good of kind For Y: Good For C: Perhaps

Birth of a Baby (American Committee on Maternal Welfare, Inc.) Unusual presentation of human birth from start of pregnancy through delivery and infant care (showing to general public in theatres). Serious, scientific, utterly frank, dignified. Stresses proper medical care, dangers of artificial abortion, etc.

For A: Novel For Y and C: Only parents should decide

Blockheads (Laurel and Hardy) (MGM) Outlandish slapstick with crazy story of Laurel staying in trenches 20 years after war is over. Discovered by Hardy, he brings endless complications to his pal who has just married. Much provocation for non-intelligent guffaws.

For A: Crazy For Y: Perhaps For C: Probably funny

Boys' Town (Spencer Tracy, Mickey Rooney, Henry Hull) (MGM) Heroic priest, believing no boy is "bad," surmounts endless obstacles to found home for wayward boys, where toughest problem (Mickey) is finally solved. Some sentimental melodrama but gripping, moving story. (Based on actual Boys' Town in Nebraska.)

For A and Y: Very good For C: Probably good

Crime over London (Basil Sydney, Margot Grahame) (Gaumont-British) Mildly-diverting, poorly edited, implausible film of American crooks in London, thwarted by Scotland Yard in daring daylight robbery. Joseph Cawthorn is fairly amusing in double role, and attractive settings provide some interest.

For A: Hardly For Y: Doubtful For C: No

A Desperate Adventure (Navarro, Blore, Marian Marsh) (Republic) Artist-hero's canvas of imaginary "ideal girl" brings complications when he meets her living sister. Pursuit ends in his preferring her much nicer sister. Light-weight, fairish comedy, but the likable Navarro deserves better.

For A: Hardly For Y: Fairly good For C: No interest

Four's a Crowd (Flynn, de Havilland, Russell, Connolly) (Warner) Fast, furious, clever romantic farce, hilariously exaggerated out of any semblance to life. Breezy dialog, zigzag motivation, unconvincing reversals, toy trains, dog chases. Related to real drama as "swing" is to music.

For A and Y: Very good of kind For C: More or less funny

Give Me a Sailor (Martha Raye, Bob Hope) (Paramount) Fast, hilarious comedy of romantic mix-ups, commendable for restraint. Martha in new type of role—and most welcome—as ugly duckling who unintentionally wins "legs" contest and is transformed into glamour girl. One unconventional but harmless situation.

For A: Good of kind For Y: Entertaining For C: Possibly

Gladiator, The (Joe E. Brown, June Travis) (Columbia) Despite some unnecessary crudities,

THE summaries and evaluations appearing on this page are those of The National Film Estimate Service. They are not the judgment of an individual but of a committee of qualified men and women who are in no way connected with the motion picture industry.

It will be noted that these estimates cover all types of films inasmuch as it is as valuable to know what not to see as to know the good films. It should be kept in mind also that titles and local advertising pictures may be quite objectionable, while the content and effect of the film are desirable and wholesome, hence these descriptions of content.

The estimate of each film is given for three groups:

A—Intelligent Adults
Y—Youth (15-20 years)
C—Children (under 15 years)

Boldface italic type indicates the special recommendation of the National Film Estimate Service.

Joe's best in months. Real human comedy included in the hilarious, but quite funny doings, as dumb, kindly hero, butt of many jokes, suddenly and temporarily becomes a superman through serum injection by experimenting scientist.

For A: Fairly good For Y: Mostly good For C: Mostly good

Higgins Family, The (Jimmy, Lucille and Russell Gleason, Lynn Roberts) (Republic) First of a new "Family" series. Rather too farcical for realism, with Russell over-prankish as the inventor-son, but elementary, amusing situations and some simple, homely values will prove entertaining to the not over-critical.

For A: Fair of kind For Y: Mostly good For C: Mature

High Command (Lionel Atwill, Lucy Mannheim) (Grand National) Rather ordinary British-made film with action—much of it confused and choppy—centering around such unpleasant ingredients as illicit love, jealousy and murder. Chief values are Atwill's acting and genuine interest and suspense in final scenes.

For A: Mediocre For Y and C: Unwholesome

Hold That Coed (Barrymore, Murphy, Weaver) (Fox) Bold, uproarious travesty of politics and football. Hilarious, pointed caricature by Barrymore as swaggering Governor running for senator. Preposterous football games—and real ones. Joan Davis on team! Overdone, but often funny; whole too farcical for serious objection.

For A: Depends on taste For Y and C: Amusing, effect doubtful

I Am the Law (Robinson, Beal, Kruger) (Columbia) Far-fetched, but lively, suspenseful melodrama, lightened by appealing humor. College law professor on sabbatical leave, becomes special prosecutor and by highly original methods smashes the racketeers. Not over-violent except for prolonged fistfight and grim suicide.

For A: Very good of kind For Y: Good For C: No

I'm from the City (Joe Penner) (RKO) Two-reel comedy material made into feature length picture, with Joe's usual muddle-headed antics and adenoidal mouthings. Afraid to death of horses he is forced into riding contest and wins in wild cross country ride. Loud laughs for Penner fans.

For A: Inane For Y and C: Probably amusing

Keep Smiling (Jane Withers, H. Wilcoxon) (Fox) Another fixer role for Jane, more credible and appealing than usual. Helps uncle, once ace director, make comeback and gets in movies herself. Lively, substantial plot, exposing grimmer side of Hollywood, well balanced with Jane's amusing antics. Fine work by cast.

For A: Fairly good For Y and C: Amusing

Lilly of Killarney (Gino Malo, John Garrick) (Ameranglo) Irish dramatic romance with charming melodies and scenic backgrounds. Elementary theme—to save family estate, hero bets his horse against villain's and wins (naturally), also clearing way for marriage to peasant heroine. Touches of homey humor.

For A: Fair For Y: Perhaps For C: Too mature

Meet the Girls (June Lang, Lynn Bari) (Fox) Tiresome, cheap mess concerning adventures of two jobless night-club entertainers on ship bound from Honolulu to U.S. Stolen gem motif, ineffectually handled. Practically whole cast are unpleasant characters, including heroines. Gambling and drunkenness are features.

For A: Poor For Y: Unwholesome For C: No

Mother and Sons (Russian, English titles) (Amkino) Dramatization of Soviet round-the-world air flight. Usual slow tempo and many closeups, but less propaganda and more human interest, especially in finely-done mother role. But dialog amply boasts of supremacy of Soviet men and machines.

For A: Fair of kind For Y: Doubtful interest For C: No

My Lucky Star (Sonja Henie, Richard Greene) (Fox) Sonja's marvelous skating probably compensates for fatuous story with preposterous collegiate background. Heroine is sent to college to model clothes, gets involved in cheap divorce suit, and an ice carnival (in department store!) straightens things out.

For A: Perhaps For Y: Probably entertaining For C: Fair

Poet and Tsar (Russian, very full English titles) (Amkino) Slow, sentimental story of trials of Pushkin and his friends under Nicholas I, stressing Tsar's cruelty, of course. Usual faults of endless close-up, tireless posing, and Russian love of mere talk and long speeches.

For A: Hardly For Y and C: No

Prison Break (Barton MacLane, Glenda Farrell) (Universal) Noble hero goes to prison for another on manslaughter charge, foils prison break, is paroled but can't find honest job. His capture of escaped convict, responsible for his troubles, finally brings happy solution for him and loyal sweetheart. Hackneyed melodrama.

For A: Hardly For Y: Unsuitable For C: No

Room Service (Marx Brothers) (RKO) Hilarious stage play is rather restrictive vehicle for nonsensical antics of rowdy trio, but more plot, less vulgarity than usual. Concerns hectic efforts of shoeing producer to get backer for show and avoid eviction from hotel. Fast, furious action and dialog.

For A: Depends on taste For Y: Probably funny For C: Perhaps

Safety in Numbers (One of Jones Family series) (Fox) Homely, human, pleasantly complex, really climactic story of how small-town folk thwarted attempted swindle by city crooks through faked proof that local swamp was valuable mineral water. Good fun for all but the over-critical.

For A: Good of kind For Y and C: Thoroughly amusing

(Continued on page 43)



The American City and Its Church. By Samuel C. Kincheloe. New York, Friendship Press, 1938. 177 p. \$1.00. Paper 60 cents.

In 1880 less than thirty per cent of the total population of our country lived in cities. Today almost half of the nation's people live in cities of 100,000 and over, or in their immediate vicinity. What of the churches in these rapidly growing centers of population? That is the question raised and discussed by the author, who speaks with authority, for few religious leaders in our land today know the city church quite as well as does Dr. Kincheloe.

The first two chapters of the book present a picture of the modern city, the word artist showing us in bold relief the major problems that affect the welfare of persons individually and as members of groups, with special attention to the problems of earning a livelihood and of unemployment. The church must help to solve these problems "in the interest of its own survival, as well as in the interest of its mission to humanity." An entire chapter is given to a study of the family in the city—the economic and social issues growing out of poor housing and slums, and the problems of delinquency and of increased leisure time.

Cities change the attitudes of people. Urbanization and secularization tend to go hand in hand. Cities reduce church membership, churches and their members are relocated in the process of urban growth and population movements. Cities cause churches to emphasize "bigness" and efficiency, often as ends in themselves; but also there has been the influence for good, because churches have been better organized and led to cooperate with each other. Kincheloe describes seven types of major institutional reactions on the part of individual churches to city life. While there are various other special adaptations made by city churches, some of them more or less successful, there are many churches that fail to meet present-day city needs.

A final chapter is devoted to the question, "What is the primary work of urban churches today, now that so many of their former responsibilities have become the concern of general community and public agencies?" The author closes this chapter and his book with this conclusion: "When we think of the genius of the church as being to give meaning and purpose to human lives, and then place alongside this conception a description of the characteristics and problems of the modern American city, we realize anew the importance of the church's work. Certainly strong local congregations need to be built, certainly local community life must be made wholesome, and certainly the larger social order demands citizens who understand its issues and who are at the

same time motivated by the spirit of Christ."

The discussion throughout is concretely practical and realistic. The book will stimulate the individual reader or the discussion group to thoughtful study and in the end to a new appreciation of the purposes and work of the city church today.

O. M.

Suggestions to Leaders of Study Classes Using "The American City and Its Church." (Samuel C. Kincheloe) New York, Missionary Education Movement, 1938. 45 p. 25 cents.

This is a booklet of suggestions to leaders of study classes using the book by Samuel C. Kincheloe, *The American City and Its Church*. There is a helpful foreword to the leader, followed by specific help in planning for the study of each chapter by the group. These materials are among the current texts in the cooperative missionary education program of the denominations.

The Minister: His World and His Work. By William Adams Brown. Nashville, Cokesbury, 1937. 248 p. \$2.00.

Here is William Adams Brown at his best in a book which ministers might well add to their "must read" list. In chapters on the world in which the minister must do his work, what the world has a right to expect of the church; the scientist's substitute for God, nature; the humanist's substitute for God, man; he delineates the broad scope of problems of the modern day. In succeeding chapters, the minister as priest, evangelist, teacher, pastor, and churchman, he gives the broader aspects of the minister's work. Dr. Brown points out that "the minister must be a Christian evangel to his people as well as an inspiring leader well informed of the movements—some hostile and some friendly—which affect vitally the social and cultural life of the people and the Christian enterprise both home and abroad." Dr. Brown believes that the parish minister is the one who must be the interpreter to his people of the function of the church in the modern world. One could wish that Dr. Brown had gone further in the outline of the minister as a teacher and churchman, but even so he has ably set forth what some of the new problems are and how a minister can and must prepare himself to meet them.

J. B. K.

Attaining Manhood. By George W. Corner. New York, Harper, 1938. 67 p. \$1.25.

"A Doctor Talks to Boys About Sex." Dr. Corner, who is Professor of Anatomy at the University of Rochester, addresses this volume to his own son and to other intelligent boys of high school age. The

essential facts of anatomy and physiology connected with sex are presented in a simple and straightforward manner, with diagrams and illustrations to make them clear. Questions about which boys are apt to gain unreliable and perverted ideas are answered in a clear and dispassionate manner. Following the factual presentation are two chapters of fatherly advice regarding sex conduct and sex disorders. In this small volume Dr. Corner has placed in compact form and simple language just about what the intelligent father would like to have the family physician say to his own son of high school age on this highly important matter.

H. C. M.

Character and Personality of Children from Broken Homes. By Nehemiah Walenstein. New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1937. 86 p. \$1.60.

On the whole children from broken homes, especially those from homes broken by death, are retarded in school grades when compared with normal school children. A broken home situation seems to be more disadvantageous to boys than to girls. Broken home children generally are inferior to normal home children in the following ways: honesty in school work, school adjustment, teacher rating, measures of courtesy and truthfulness.

It seems clear that being subjected to a broken home situation is associated with inferiority in certain aspects of character and personality as far as elementary school children are concerned. The study does not indicate whether the difference in character and personality is due primarily to the facts of the broken home, or whether it is due to hereditary social and economic factors of which the broken home itself may be in part a result.

H. C. M.

The Christian Community in the Modern World, a Preparatory Study for the World Conference of Christian Youth, Amsterdam, Holland, July 25-August 3, 1939. By Walter W. Gethman. 52, Rue de Paquis, first floor, Geneva, Switzerland, 1938. 100 p. 25 cents.

The study is based largely on the outcomes and reports of the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences of 1937. It is penetrating and courageous. The youth for whose study it is designed would need to be quite mature in experience and religious thinking in order to deal effectively with the basic ideas. The study is well adapted to a mature student group, or to a young adult group who have had some background of experience in dealing with both major social issues and basic Christian doctrines. If the youth gathering in Amsterdam in 1939 shall have prepared

themselves for engaging in such a study as this, the Amsterdam Conference ought to have highly significant outcomes.

H. C. M.

Contemporary Continental Theology. By Walter Marshall Horton. New York, Harper, 1938. 246 p. \$2.00.

This book follows a previous volume by Professor Horton on Contemporary English Theology. The theology of Europe, apart from Great Britain, is today influencing Christian thinking throughout the world. As the ecumenical idea takes hold of Christendom the theological views of the various sections of the world must interact upon each other. For this reason such a book as this renders a unique service to Christians this side of the Atlantic. It deals with the theological trends in the Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church, and the German churches.

P. R. H.

The Historical Background of the Bible. By J. N. Schofield. New York, Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1938. 333 p. \$2.50.

Presents the background of both the Old and the New Testaments; contains an account of archaeological discoveries throwing light on the Bible story; describes the rise and fall of the Jewish people, and reviews the various attempts to re-establish the "Children of Israel" in Palestine.

Men of Power, Vol. II. By Fred Eastman. Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1938. 186 p. \$1.50. Publication Date September 1.

The second in a series of five volumes of biographical sketches written in a readable and attractive style to answer the question: Why did these men stand out above their fellows, and what was the source of the power through which they bequeath to us so large a part of our social, scientific, political, and spiritual heritage? The present volume provides biographies of Francis of Assisi, Leonardo da Vinci, Oliver Cromwell, and John Milton.

City Shadows. By Robert W. Searle. New York, Friendship Press, 1938. 165 p. Cloth \$1.00, paper 60 cents.

By means of short, intensely human stories of real characters, the author tells of the daily service of the home missions worker, the community-conscious church worker, the neighborhood visitor and the city nurse. These accounts take us into prisons, court rooms, consultation chambers of social agencies, church offices, hospitals, city streets and crowded tenements. The book concludes with a discussion of the church's part in meeting the needs of the modern city. A missionary education text for the study of the city during 1938-39.

Origins of the Gospels. By Floyd V. Filson. New York, Abingdon, 1938. 216 p. \$2.00.

A popular summary of the findings of the literary and historical study of the Gospels. The interesting and important discoveries in the field of textual criticism

are first discussed; then follows the question of the language in which the Gospels were written. The method of gospel study known as form criticism and the Synoptic problem are dealt with and the book closes with a survey of the widely divergent views held about the fourth Gospel. Implications of the discussions for the work of the minister are pointed out. The material is presented in the belief that such a background study leads to a fuller and clearer understanding of the message of the Gospels. The author is Professor of New Testament Literature and History in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Chicago.

Makers of Christianity. By William Warren Sweet. New York, Henry Holt & Company, 1937. 351 p. \$2.00.

This third volume in the series *Makers of Christianity* presents the Christian movement in America by means of a series of thumb-nail sketches of vivid personalities who made it move, or through whom it moved. In the light of present theological trends this biographical account of the movement from the Calvinism of Puritan New England to the liberalism and social gospels of our time sketches a background of understanding for our American religious development.

Can Parents Educate One Another? A Study of Lay Leadership in New York State. By Mary Shirley. New York, National Council of Parent Education, Inc., 1938. 130 p.

The author studied parent education classes under way with lay leadership. The study reports the following major topics: "How Professional Workers Regard Lay Leaders, and How They Train Them"; "How Lay Leaders Conduct Parent Study Groups"; "How the Lay Leader Regards Her Work," and "What Parents Say They Gain from Study Groups and How They Regard Lay Leaders." The general answer to the question which forms the title of the study is a guarded affirmative.

The Ministry of Friendly Guidance. By Richard Hoiland. Philadelphia, Judson Press, 1938. (Revised Edition.) 138 p. 50 cents.

The second revision, this time in an enlarged form, of a discussion course on youth evangelism. Designed to give guidance in the youth action project on "Helping Others to Be Christian."

The Problems of a Changing Population. Report of the Committee on Population Problems to the National Resources Committee. Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1938. 75 cents paper cover.

This is a report of the Committee on Population Problems made to the National Resources Committee. Presents significant data in regard to population trends, anticipated stable population, changing age groups, migration within the country, health, education, economic opportunity and other similar problems which must be faced within the next generation.

Christian Faith and the Modern State. By Nils Ehrenstrom. Chicago, Willett, Clark, 1937. 158 p. \$1.50.

Discusses the theories of the state and its functions and the views of the great religious communions regarding their relation to the state.

Books Received

ADVENTURES OF SERVICE. Stories of Modern Pioneers, by D. M. Gill and A. M. Pullen. Friendship Press. 50 cents.

ALL AROUND THE CITY, by Esther Freivogel. Friendship Press. \$1.00 cloth. 50 cents paper. (To be reviewed.)

AMERICA LOOKS ABROAD, by Frederick L. Schuman and George Soule. No. 3 of World Affairs Pamphlets. Foreign Policy Association and National Peace Conference. 25 cents. A symposium designed to stimulate critical examination of the central problems confronting American foreign policy today.

THE AMERICAN CITY AND ITS CHURCH, by Samuel C. Kincheloe. Friendship Press. 60 cents paper. \$1.00 cloth. (Reviewed in this issue.)

ANIMALS OF THE BIBLE, by Dorothy P. Lathrop. Stokes Co. \$2.00. A picture book, being an approach for children to some of the most beautiful and appealing Bible stories. Twenty-eight black-and-white drawings.

THE ART OF GROUP WORSHIP, by Robert Seneca Smith. Abingdon. 50 cents. (To be reviewed.)

THE BIBLE COMES ALIVE, by Sir Charles Marston. Revell. \$2.00.

BY FAITH, by Dwight J. Bradley. Abingdon. \$1.00. Devotional readings on faith in religious values as exemplified by the prophets and Jesus as the way of victory over modern foes of Christianity.

CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY TESTS, by J. B. Maller. Teachers College, Columbia University. 75 cents. A descriptive bibliography of character and personality tests, including measures of attitudes, interest adjustment, appreciation, moral knowledge, behavior and rating scales. Subject, author and publishers' index and an index to reviews and bibliographies of tests in this field.

CHRISTIAN ATTITUDES TO WAR AND PEACE, by T. S. K. Scott-Craig. Scribner's. \$1.75.

CHRISTIANITY AND POLITICS, by Albert Hyma. Lippincott. \$3.00. (To be reviewed.)

CITY SHADOWS, by Robert W. Searle. Friendship Press. Cloth \$1.00. Paper 60 cents. (To be reviewed.)

CONCERNING THE CHOICES BEFORE US, by Benson Y. Landis. Abingdon. 15 cents. A discussion outline on *The Choice Before Us* by E. Stanley Jones.

A COURSE ON INDIA FOR ADULTS, by T. H. P. Sailer. Missionary Education



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Movement. 25 cents. Based primarily on the study books *The Church Takes Root in India* and *Moving Millions*.

DOORWAYS TO DEVOTION, by Gladys C. Murrell. Abingdon. \$1.00. Worship Services for Women's Meetings.

ECONOMIC SECURITY AND WORLD PEACE, by Sonia Zunsner Hyman. League for Industrial Democracy. 10 cents. A brief study of economic problems as these relate to world peace. Includes a study section, discussion questions and bibliography.

THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH, by Charles M. Jacobs. United Lutheran Publishing House. \$1.00. Devotional addresses on the Apostles' Creed to seminary students by the late president of the Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia.

FOLK TALES OF CHHATISGARH, INDIA, by Theophil H. Twente. Bodoni Press. \$1.00.

THE GOD WHOM WE IGNORE, by John Kennedy. Macmillan. \$2.00. (To be reviewed.)

GOD'S TABLE, by John E. Charlton. Abingdon. 75 cents. Short Communion talks to children and young people.

THE HISTORICAL ATLAS OF THE HOLY LAND. Rand McNally. \$1.00. A book of colored maps of ancient and modern Palestine, with an Index to Places in Modern Palestine.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE BIBLE, by J. N. Schofield. Thomas Nelson & Sons. \$2.50. (Reviewed in this issue.)

THE LIGHT OF THE BIBLE, by Vernon F. Storr. Harper. \$1.25.

MASTERY IN MONEY MANAGEMENT, by Walter McDonald Kahle. General Boards of Church of the Brethren. 25 cents. A study course for youth and adults on the Christian approach to the use of money.

MIRACLES OF FAITH, by John Mail-

lard. Harper. \$1.25. The author's record, from his own experience, of how the healing power of faith and prayer has cured the spiritually and physically ill.

ORIGINS OF THE GOSPELS, by Floyd V. Filson. Abingdon. \$2.00. (Reviewed in this issue.)

OXFORD GARNET BIBLE. Oxford University Press. \$4.75. Oxford Garnet 16mo. Text Bible self-pronouncing, 10-point, size, 7½ x 5, from \$2.00 type, to \$9.00.

PITY THE PERSECUTOR by Julius Gordon. Richard R. Smith Co. \$2.00. A study of the effects of Nazi anti-Semitism on the perpetrators of persecution, and of what can be done to aid the growth of democracy and halt the onrush of modern tyranny.

PLAYS FOR THE CHANGING WORLD, by Harold A. Ehrensperger. Abingdon. 25 cents.

THE PROBLEM OF FOLLOWING JESUS. by James Gordon Gilkey. Macmillan. \$1.50. A brief analysis of Christ's teaching as preserved in the first three Gospels, with applications to problems of modern living. Case studies of such applications are included.

PROBLEMS OF A CHANGING POPULATION. United States Government Printing Office. 75 cents paper cover. (Reviewed in this issue.)

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION AT THE CROSSROADS, by Boyd H. Bode. Newson. \$1.00. (To be reviewed.)

PSYCHOLOGY FOR CHRISTIAN TEACHERS, by Alfred L. Murray. Round Table. \$2.00. (To be reviewed.)

RE-DISCOVERING THE CREED, by Mildred Whitney Stillman. Idlewild Press. \$1.00. (To be reviewed.)

RELIGION AND THE CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY, by Howard W. Hintz. Friends General Conference. 10 cents. In facing the major social and spiritual problems of our times, the author concludes that devotion to the democratic ideal, reverence for personality and the love of truth are integral elements of the same philosophy of life and are grounded in an idealistic or religious motivation of experience.

RETHINKING RELIGION, by John Haynes Holmes. Macmillan. \$2.25. (To be reviewed.)

RIGHT AND WRONG, by William P. King. Abingdon. \$2.00. (To be reviewed.)

THE RIGHT TO BELIEVE, by J. S. Whale. Scribner's. \$1.25. (To be reviewed.)

STATE POPULATION CENSUS BY FAITHS, Meaning, Reliability and Value, by H. S. Linfield. Hasid's Bibliographic and Library Service. \$2.00.

SUGGESTIONS TO LEADERS OF STUDY CLASSES USING *The American City and Its Church* (Samuel C. Kincheloe), by Kenneth D. Miller. Missionary Education Movement. 25 cents. (To be reviewed.)

TALES FROM INDIA, by Basil Mathews. Friendship Press. Cloth \$1.00. Paper 50 cents. Stories of men and women from India who faced persecution because of their loyalty to Jesus Christ.

TALES FROM MANY LANDS, Stories for Juniors, by I. L. Geyler and K. Ozier. Morehouse-Gorham Co. 50 cents.

URBAN SCENE, by Margueritte Har-

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mon Bro. Friendship Press. 25 cents. See "The City and Its Problems, What Are the Facts?" on page 22 of this issue.

A WORKING FAITH FOR THE WORLD, by Hugh Vernon White. Harper. \$2.00. (To be reviewed.)

YOUTH TODAY. A magazine. Modern Youth Press. 25 cents. Being Volume I, Number 1, of a new monthly digest journal of news and literature for boys and girls.

World Happenings

RELIGIOUS FILMS IN ENGLAND

The third annual Religious Film Summer School was held last July in England. One hundred and twelve representatives of the clergy and the film industry of the British Empire met under the sponsorship of the Religious Film Society and the Cinema Christian Council to discuss "Films and the Kingdom of God." Mr. William Rogers, of the Division of Visual Experiment of the Harmon Foundation, New York, represented the United States.

Mr. Rogers says that there is much enthusiasm in England over the possibilities of motion pictures serving the church in two particular ways. "First," he says, "films are considered valuable for religious educational purposes. Then there are some pastors working in underprivileged sections who consider films important as an attraction churches may offer to draw parishioners to their altars." He added that they face a real problem there in the fact that the "pub," corresponding somewhat to the old time saloon in America, has been the poor man's social club in England's slum areas. In meeting this influence, churches are using motion pictures in Sunday evening worship services to provide some recreational release for residents of sections where other facilities are lacking.

There are not many good religious films in England, he discovered. Teachers of both Sunday schools and day schools stressed the need for direct teaching films on religious subjects. In the day schools, such pictures would be especially useful since religious instruction is required throughout the English school system.

Mr. Rogers has secured for use in this country the English sound pictures, "Barabbas," and "The Life of William Tyndale." Three American films were shown at the sessions and retained for use in England.

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Senior and Young People's Departments

(Continued from page 32)

PRAYER RESPONSE: "Father, grant us peace."

Father Grant Us Peace

Ancient Round Arranged by Nancy Longenecker

First: Fa-ther, Fa-ther, grant us peace;
 Second: Fa-ther, Fa-ther, grant us peace;
 Third: Fa-ther, Fa-ther, grant us peace;
 Fourth: Fa-ther, Fa-ther, grant us peace.

READING:

"To attain world peace we must love and work to attain in our own souls the inner spirit of peace. Before we can attain harmony of nations we must attain harmony of individuals. That harmony must begin in each individual soul. If we love that inner peace of mind in our own and in other souls, then we have a right to pray for peace, and only then. When Jesus said, "Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the children of God," he was referring to those who create peace in individual souls just as much as to those who bring peace to nations. Changing individual lives must precede, be one step ahead, of every effort to change nations, if we would have that change permanent."⁸

HYMN: "We Would be Building." Tune—Finlandia. (Printed above.)

UNISON: The Lord's Prayer

December 25

THEME: *The will of God is done on earth through new birth.*

MUSIC: "He shall feed his flock," from *Messiah*, by Handel.

READER:

Far over the clear starlit night floated celestial music that echoed and reechoed across the hills of Bethlehem as the angelic choirs sang the first Christmas carol, GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST AND ON EARTH PEACE, GOODWILL TOWARD MEN!

The shepherds fell upon their faces full of wonder and awe at the sound of the voices; then they arose and followed the song, even unto Bethlehem where they found the Christ. This song has been ringing throughout the ages ever since that night. Perhaps if we were simpler folk and lived in closer relationship with the great universal realities as did those shepherds of old, we too could see the light and hear the song and rise up to look for the Child.

⁸ From *I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes*, by Glenn Clark, Harper & Brothers, Publishers. Used by permission.

It was as late as the fourth century when December 25 was chosen as the birthday of Christ. The great time of celebration of the Roman Saturnalia and the Feast of Lights, of the Jews, came when the sun began its upward wend—so why not celebrate the coming of Christ into a world of darkness, bringing with him an everlasting light.

There is a legend that St. Francis of Assisi was responsible for the first Christmas carol. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries some were spreading unbelief in the Virgin Birth of Christ. This teaching was rank heresy to St. Francis and he sought to overcome it by some really persuasive method. The story goes that he was in Greccio, Italy, at the time and there he set up a crèche with the manger, the ox, the ass, Mary and the Child within one of the old churches on Christmas Eve. The villagers came bearing torches and flares and went in and out all during the night to see again the Holy Family. The monks sang hymns and St. Francis stood by looking with reverence upon the holy sight, when the Child image in the manger really came to life, lifted up his arms to St. Francis and smiled at him. Those who saw it said it was a miracle. Perhaps it was a miracle, for at this time the presence of Christ became a reality in the hearts of the village folk that night and they went forth with songs of joy. A new life had come to them.

This is a day of great rejoicing and nothing expresses our rejoicing as well as song. Christmas carols are being sung today by all people in every land who love the name of Jesus and who know something of his birth. Our hymn books are full of carols for this feast day and have become a rich heritage for us all.

PROPHECY:

Scripture: Isaiah 52:1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9; 42:4, 5, 9, 10, 11.

Carol: "O come, O come, Immanuel." Tune—Veni

ANNUNCIATION:

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38.

Carol: "Come, thou long expected Jesus." Tune—Hyfrydol

THE INN:

Scripture: Luke 2:1, 3, 4, 5a, 7.

Solo: "No candle was there and no fire," by Lehman

SHEPHERDS AND THE ANGELS:

Scripture: Luke 2:8-15.

Carol: "While shepherds watched their flocks by night." Tune—Christmas

THE WISE MEN:

Scripture: Matthew 11:1-10

Carol: "As with gladness men of old." Tune—Dix

AT THE MANGER:

Scripture: Luke 2:16-19. Matthew 2:9b-11.

Carol: "There's a song in the air." Tune—Christmas Song

ADORATION:

Carols:

"Oh come, all ye faithful." Tune—Adeste Fideles

"Good Christian men, rejoice." Tune—Dulci Jubilo

"Christians, awake, salute the happy morn." Tune—Yorkshire

BENEDICTION: "Silent Night" (sung as a prayer, softly)

Current Film Estimates

(Continued from page 39)

Secrets of an Actress (Kay Francis, George Brent) (First National) Unpretentious, dignified, well-knit little triangle with actress heroine, hero and his self-sacrificing friend, finely played by Ian Hunter. Troubled romance, numerous reversals. Simply and convincingly done save for maid's labored comedy.

For A: Good of kind For Y: Mature For C: No

Sing You Sinners (Crosby, MacMurray) (Para) Bing effective in character part. Music incidental to heart-warming, simple, humorous story of likable family—Bing easy-going, irresponsible son, Fred the hard-working son. Fine family relationships but dubious values involved in racetrack elements.

For A: Pleasing

For Y: Perhaps

For C: Hardly suitable

Slander House (Adrienne Ames, Craig Reynolds) (Progressive) Apt title for fashionable beauty salon where much of action occurs. Unpleasant, sensational stuff. Heroine gets involved in scandal which is climaxed by neglected wife's attempted suicide as result of malicious gossip of patrons. Hero unconvincing.

For A: Hardly

For Y: No

For C: Certainly not

Spawn of the North (Fonda, Raft, Lamour) (Paramount) Impressive backgrounds, fine camera shots and trained seal provide chief interests in clumsy, rambling melodrama of Alaskan salmon fishing. Long sequence of greswome sea fighting. Grim climax. Fine acting by Barrymore and Tamiroff, rest of cast ineffectual.

For A: Fair of kind For Y: Strong For C: No

Straight, Place and Show (Ritz Brothers, Arlen, Phyllis Brooks) (Fox) Typical desperate clowning by Ritz brothers. Hectic pantomime, wrestling match, misplaced racehorse, wild steeple-chase, and continuous raucous noise almost bury romance of aristocrat hero and horse-trainer heroine. Many laughs for the many.

For A: Hardly

For Y and C: Perhaps

Tenth Avenue Kid (Bruce Cabot, Beverly Roberts, Tommy Ryan) (Republic) Grim, unpleasant crime thriller. Tries to make amusing toughest boy character to date, tool of crookdom and center of violence, flying bullets, falling bodies. Largely artificial thrill stuff that outweighs effect of lad's final reformation.

For A: Poor

For Y and C: Certainly not

Thank You, Madame (Jan Kiepura) (German-English titles) Fairly entertaining film; pleasing settings, fine singing, good acting, elementary humor. Trite plot of humble-life hero rising to operatic stardom. He almost loses his simple flower-girl sweetheart in the rise, but climax sees them happily reunited.

For A: Good of kind

For Y: Perhaps

For C: No interest

Three Loves Has Nancy (Gaynor, Montgomery Tonic) (MGM) Breezy, sophisticated, well-acted farce. Clever dialog and amusing, unconventional situations when guileless small-town heroine invades the penthouse apartment of a conceited New York author and his publisher, who become rivals for her hand.

For A: Very good of kind For Y: Sophisticated

For C: No

Three on a Week-end (M. Lockwood, John Lodge) (Gaumont-British) Realistic delineation of English working class on holiday at seaside. Central theme—of young nurse who deserts fiancé and saves bereaved husband of her patient from suicide—slowed up too much by humorous activities of other week-enders.

For A: Perhaps For Y: Little interest For C: No

Valley of the Giants (Wayne Morris, Claire Trevor) (Warner) Pretentious film with striking scenes of Redwood lumbering in incessant Technicolor. Rest mere frontier melodrama, he-man pioneers fighting ruthless villains, fists, guns, dynamite. Poor direction. Villainess turns heroine, villain repents incredibly.

For A: Depends on taste

For Y: Thrilling

For C: No

You Can't Take It With You (L. Barrymore, Arnold, Arthur, Stewart) (Columbia) The famous stageplay finely screened with notable cast. Weird family done to the life, hilariously funny, wholesomely entertaining. Marked changes and additions to original make film very long but comedy values are fully sustained.

For A and Y: Excellent

For C: Good

(Continued from page 6)

The need of clear and common thinking in the church about war and the objectives of peace would seem to be fundamental to effective peace education in missionary circles. For this the decisions of the Oxford Conference, Section on the Universal Church and the World of Nations, are pertinent to a Christian program of peace. A partial picture of the section's findings follows:

The church is one on earth, and while supremely concerned that persons "be born again" it has a concern with civilization in general. It has a duty "to bring Caesar—that is, the traditions and practices of government—to the recognition of his duty to God." The state and the international order are under the ultimate governance of God, but today relations between states are based on power which is irresponsible, and the abrogation of absolute national sovereignty is fundamental to any real international cooperation.

Therefore, for peaceful change and in education for peace, the church should seek reliable information and counteract false propaganda, study world problems in the light of Christian truth, foster a true understanding of different peoples, and be ready to share with less fortunate nations. On their part, equality of opportunity should not be sought as a means of reversing in their favor present inequalities. The church should guide the energy of its members into effective channels that may influence national policies in the direction of peace. But it can not leave the duty of peace making to political agencies. It should be able to discover characteristically Christian ways to be a healing and reconciling influence. Within the church, removal of racial barriers, religious freedom, mutual aid, and education for peace are enjoined.

If the considered conclusions of leaders of the world-wide church in conference together have spiritual authority, then a charter for Christian peace education is here.

Indeed, a peace program is in existence in some communions. It does not move fast. It encounters an awareness of its importance but preoccupation with the present church and missionary program on the part of leaders and laity.

The acceptance that religion is both individual and social has yet to be linked with the conclusion of that concept—time and place in the missionary program. Leadership with enlarged or different training is called for. A simplification or a choice of peace and war issues will be necessary. Exchange of students, closer relations with missionaries and between nationals are capable of fruitful results. Such changes in the missionary program open up to the imagination the unique place of service that missionary education might take in carrying out a program of effective peace education.

How Conversations Help

(Continued from page 9)

structive powers of faith, hope and love, is simply incalculable. Conversation was his preferred means of teaching. From him we might well learn the art of helpful conversation. For we all converse pretty steadily, and through our conversations exercise a powerful influence for good or evil. In the matter of conversation, as in so many other respects, Jesus "has given us an example," and we shall do well to follow after him.

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The City with Its Problems

(Continued from page 22)

gambling; of vice; of city planning; and many others.

Questions. The author of *Urban Scene* lists a number of suggestions for further study. Among them are the following. In addition, she indicates ways in which progressive churches have sought to serve their "urban scene," which will stimulate other churches to do more effective work.

1. What portion of taxes in your community goes to schools? Unemployment relief? Public health?
2. Has your community any slum clearance or low-rent housing projects? Does it need them?
3. Is "filled milk" sold as a substitute and used by children?
4. How many parks and playgrounds are located near congested areas in your city?
5. What kind of commercial amusements are there in your neighborhood? In your city? Does your church combat unwholesome commercial amusements?
6. Do you have a public health nursing service? Clinics for persons of small means? Open to all races?